COLLECTOR'S EDITION: THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO TYPOGRAPHY, ILLUSTRATION AND GRAPHIC DESIGN

COMPUTER arts projects

THE IN-DEPTH GUIDE FOR DIGITAL CREATIVES

100 RULES OF GRAPHIC DESIGN

ESSENTIAL ADVICE FROM THE WORLD'S BEST DESIGNERS...

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- PETER SAVILLE
- DAVID CARSON
- SUBSTANCE
- PENTAGRAM
- CARLOS SEGURA
- BRUNO MAAG
- ALAN KITCHING
- 123KLAN
- MAX KISMAN
- RIAN HUGHES
- NEIL SUMMEROUR
- FONTSMITH
- STUDIO OUTPUT
- VAULT49
- PER GUSTAFSON
- DEREK LEA
- JEREMY TANKARD
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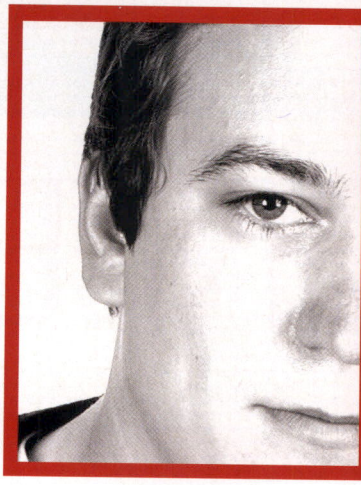
Welcome



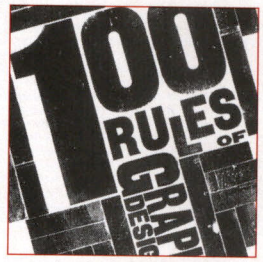
Over the past few months, we've been working on something very special. The idea to bring together the world's leading designers to discuss the rules of design was certainly an ambitious one, but with the cooperation and sheer willingness of all of this month's interviewees and contributors, we've pulled it off.

As the following pages unfold, you'll learn the secrets and stories of the best designers in the world: Neville Brody, Peter Saville, David Carson, to name but a few. There's no stone left unturned – whether your preference is typography, graphic design or illustration, there's advice and anecdotes here that will inspire and enthuse you, as well as improve your design skills and industry knowledge.

Thanks to everyone who has made this issue possible, it's one that we're very proud of. It's also my last, so I hope you enjoy reading it as much as I've enjoyed editing this magazine. Cheers!

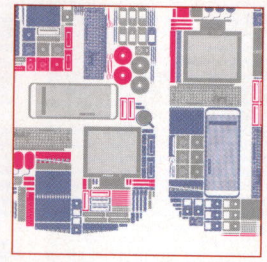
Rob Carney, Associate Editor
rob.carney@futurenet.co.uk

Contributing creatives



COVER IMAGE
Alan Kitching

The world-famous typographer Alan Kitching is responsible for this month's striking cover image. See more of his work at:
[w] www.debutart.com



Studio Output

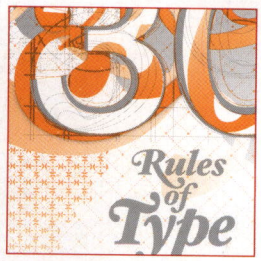
Sara at Studio Output set to work on illustrating our 30 rules of graphic design. The result? A carefully crafted, beautifully executed original illustration. See the website below for more of the studio's work.
[w] www.studio-output.com

Mark Penfold

One-time *Computer Arts* news-hound and regular *CAP* contributor, Mark Penfold has been on a mission over the last few months, interviewing the world's leading designers for this collector's issue.

123klan

Scien of French design and illustration outfit 123klan has conjured up a truly stunning illustration to kick off our 30 rules of illustration section, beginning on page 50.
[w] www.123klan.com



Jeff Knowles

Our good friend Jeff Knowles at Research Studios brings you not only some truly invaluable design advice over the course of this issue, but also the sublime illustration on page 14.
[w] www.researchstudios.com

Tom Skipp

Once of Saville Associates and now designer on Condé Nast's *GQ Style*, Tom Skipp illustrates our special sealed section – bringing you the top advice from the world's leading designers...
[w] www.tomskipp.com

Tell us what topics you'd like to see covered in-depth in *Computer Arts Projects*. Contact us on:
[e] rob.carney@futurenet.co.uk

We're always on the lookout for new artists as well as established creatives – so if you're interested in contributing to the magazine, please send some examples of your work to **[e] johann.chan@futurenet.co.uk**

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30 RULES OF TYPOGRAPHY

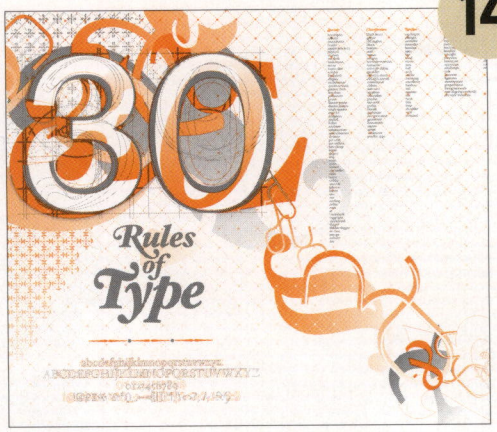
14

We bring you our expert panel's 30 rules of type. Learn the fundamentals and intricacies of type design from the best...

"I've never liked light type. It's an anomaly in the history of typography"
Alan Kitching, page 17

"There's nothing more embarrassing than a poorly spaced font"
Bruno Maag, page 26

"How can there be too many fonts in the world? Are there too many songs?"
Rian Hughes, page 18



30 RULES OF GRAPHIC DESIGN

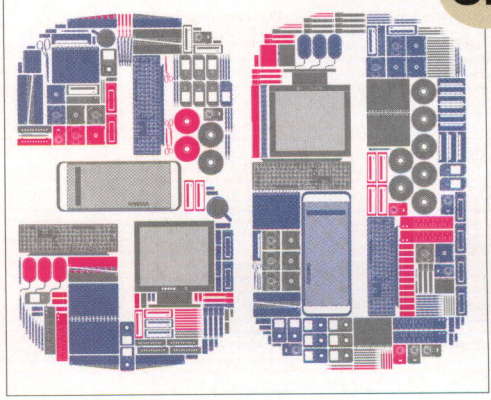
32

The 30 rules of graphic design, as selected for you by the best designers in the world...

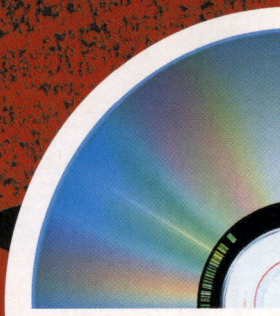
"Building one's network is critical if you hope to nurture allies"
Neil Fletcher, page 36

"Just because you can apply an inner bevel doesn't mean you need to"
Neil Summerour, page 49

"You should always treat a friend in the most suspicious way ever"
Ed Templeton, page 37



WIN ADOBE CS 2 WORTH OVER £2,000
PAGE 31



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SEE PAGE 96...

30 RULES OF ILLUSTRATION

Become a successful illustrator with these 30 essential rules from the industry's most sought-after artists...

"I wanted to really play up the idea of something sticky and seductive"
Autumn Whitehurst, page 56

"Style just means a way of working that is individual to you"
David Foldvari, page 55

"Collaboration gets you involved in the global community"
Roddy Llewellyn, page 59

50

THE TOP TEN RULES

Here they are, the top ten rules of graphic design as chosen by, to name a few, David Carson, Neville Brody and Peter Saville...

"Make a living from your hobby. Clock watching is for insurance salesmen"
David Carson, page 80

"You don't have just a client; you have a person that has to live with your work"
Neville Brody, page 76

"When confronted with impossibility, therein lies the solution"
Peter Saville, page 77

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100 rules of graphic design
The world's leading designers, artists and illustrators share their experiences and expert knowledge...

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100 RULES OF GRAPHIC DESIGN

The panel of experts

Introducing the world's leading typographers, graphic designers and illustrators...

This month, we've interviewed over 30 of the best designers in the world, questioning them on their design ways, ethics, skills and anything else we could think of in order to bring you this collector's issue of *Computer Arts Projects*.

Over the course of the issue, you'll glean expert advice from such seminal designers as Neville Brody, Peter Saville and David Carson. You'll find out what makes these designers tick, what they think about the state of thee industry, and how you can learn from these almost legendary figures.

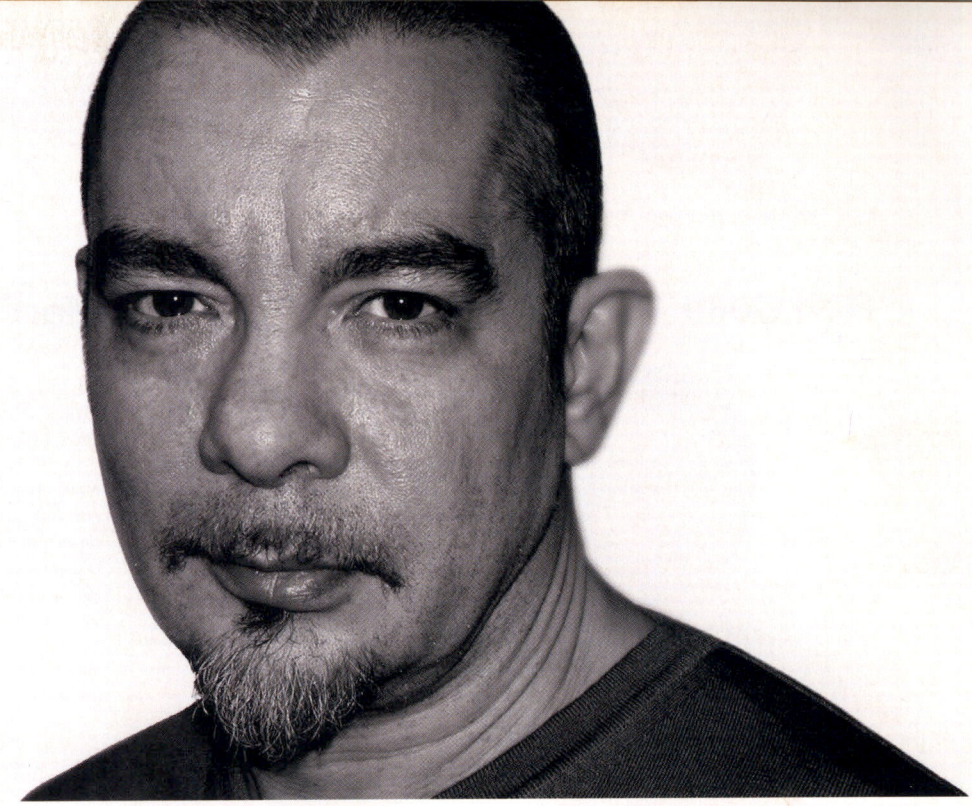
As a reference containing the thoughts and advice from the world's leading designers, there's nothing better. So keep this issue by your desk for reference – you never know when you'll have a problem that needs solving by a world-class designer. Here, we introduce our panel of experts...

123klan

Job Title: Graphic Designer
Clients: Wired magazine, Nike, Carhartt, Mini Cooper, PlayStation, Stussy
Web: www.123klan.com

The 123klan came to graphic design from graffiti, thanks to the work of Neville Brody. The seven-strong graffiti crew from the north of France produces work with a strong typographic element, harking back to the letterforms which street art has developed. It represents the collision of the street and the computer.

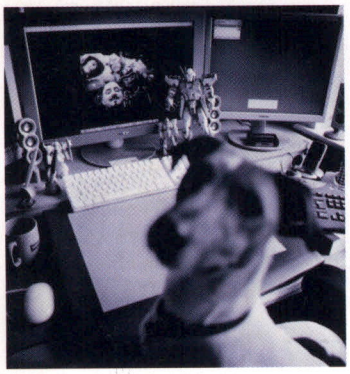
Neville Brody



Job Title: Co-Founder and Creative Director, Research Studios
Clients: Kenzo, Macromedia, Adidas-Salomon, Pathé, ICA
Web: www.researchstudios.com

Neville Brody has been making design matter for more than 20 years. His work pushes design forward with great thought and direction. His work for *The Face*, *Arena* and *The Observer* magazines established him as not only a great designer but also a prolific one. Since 1994, Research Studios has embodied his principled, intelligent approach to the visual media.

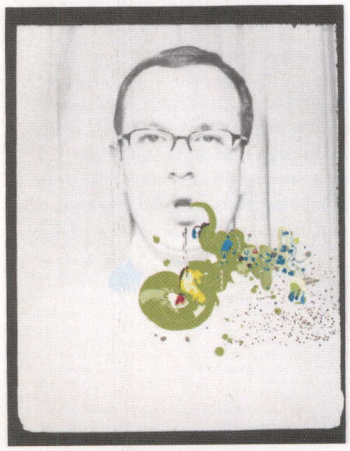
Benedict Campbell



Job Title: Freelance Illustrator
Clients: Triumph Motorcycles, Lever Brothers, Vauxhall Cars, Nike
Web: www.benedict1.com

Benedict Campbell has more than 20 years of experience of producing imagery for advertising, first as photographer, then as digital artist. His work is of the near future, often 'hyper-real', it suggests depth and a strong connection with technology. Many of the world's leading brands employ Benedict to catapult their products into the future.

Mike Cina



Job Title: Creative Director
Clients: HP, Apple, Fuse TV, Star Tribune
Web: www.weworkforthem.com
www.youworkforthem.com

Mike Cina is a digital artist, a graphic designer, a typographer, a video director. The list would be shorter if it contained the things he doesn't have going on. Whatever the media his work is always inspiring and concept-driven, but mostly just plain good.

David Carson

Job Title: Principal and Chief Designer, David Carson Design
Clients: Mercedes Benz, Bank of Montreal, Microsoft, Quicksilver, David Byrne, Pepsi
Web: www.davidcarsondesign.com

David Carson's first book, with Lewis Blackwell, The End of Print, is the top-selling graphic design book of all time. This man needs no introduction.

Rob Coke

Job Title: Creative Director
Clients: BBC Radio 1, DJ Magazine, USC, Mantis Recordings, Stealth, BMG
Web: www.studio-output.com

Founded in 2002, Studio Output has quickly established itself as a forward-thinking design outfit. Its work spans print, web and moving image but manages to maintain a rare quality whatever the media. Rob Coke is one of the three founders, all of whom "share a passion for powerful design which transcends pure function."

Martin Fewell

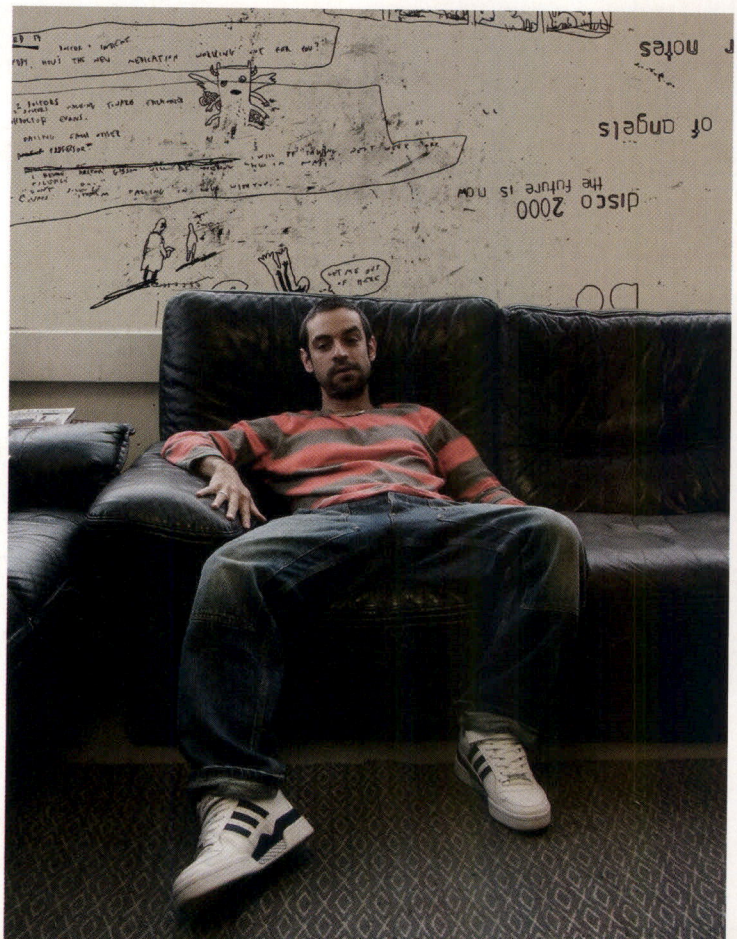
Job Title: Graphic Designer
Clients: Nike, Ministry of Sound, Sony
Web: www.martinfewell.com

Martin Fewell is "originally from the land of concrete cows and roundabouts," Milton Keynes, and studied at Salford University and graduated in 2000. After a five-year stint at a few London agencies Martin now lives up north, in Manchester. He has produced work for some of the worlds largest and smallest companies "which is the way he likes it."

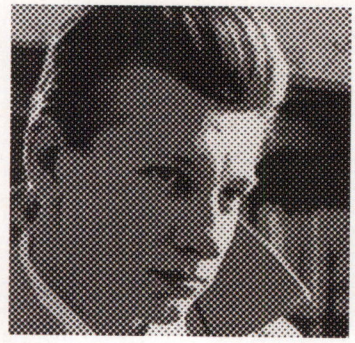
David Foldvari

Job Title: Freelance Illustrator
Clients: Nike, Dazed & Confused, Final Home T-shirts
Web: www.davidfoldvari.co.uk

Brighton's David Foldvari produces images that haunt the imagination. A talent for capturing mood and emotion is deployed by a mind intent on depicting the world with honesty and a 2B pencil. His work is in demand like never before and quite rightly so. Look out for the launch of his Happy Happy World project.



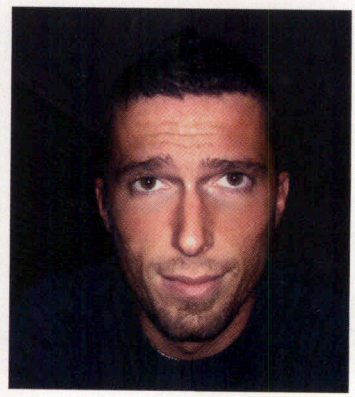
Neil Fletcher, Substance



Job Title: Digital Artist, Graphic Designer
Clients: Doyen-D, Ümran Projects, Somatic Responses, RayGun Publishing
Web: www.imagesofsubstance.com

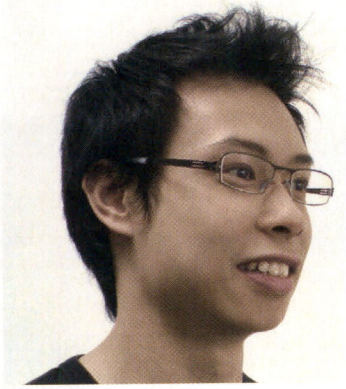
Sheffield in the winter of 1994 saw the founding of Substance. The initial line-up of Neil Fletcher and Christopher Ashworth has grown, but the group remains in Sheffield, from which it draws a powerful influence. Neil is intent on exploring the possibilities of expression which graphic design promises but rarely delivers.

Mauro Gatti



Job Title: Creative Director, Illustrator
Clients: MTV, Computer Arts
Web: www.thebrainbox.com

Mauro Gatti is armed with acute powers of observation and a sharp sense of humour, his work gives us both barrels, right between the eyes. A versatile, cross-media artist, Mauro is guaranteed to bring a smile to your face and leave you with a message.



Simon Yuen & James Bowden, GR/DD

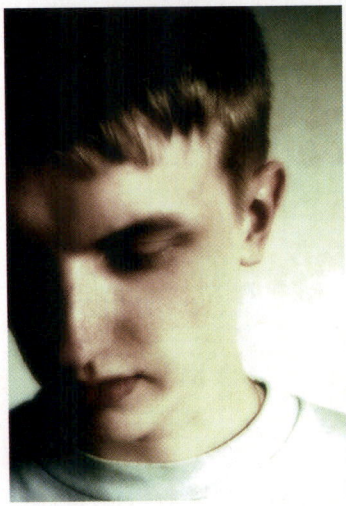
Job Title: Co-Founder and Director, Co-Founder and Director
Clients: PlayStation, EMI, BMG, Simon & Schuster, The British Library
Web: www.grdd.co.uk

James and Simon are the two founding members of the London-based graphic and interactive design agency, GR/DD. Both graduated from Central Saint Martins College in 1997. Their concept-driven approach to design results in an inspirational and eclectic mix of media and graphic style.

Per Gustafson

Job Title: Art Director, Designer
Clients: Adidas, Axcent watches, Ericsson, Headspin, Digital Vision, UEFA
Web: www.modernstyle.nu

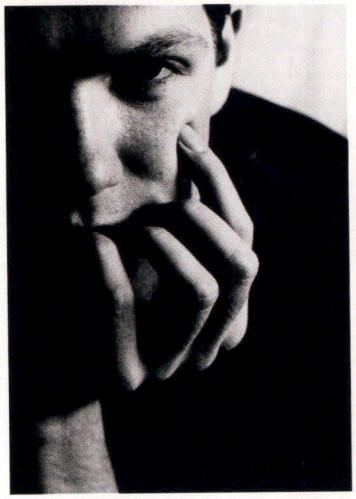
In addition to being the founder of the digital art site modernstyle.nu, Per Gustafson is also the founder of the Swedish based, internet media company, Geidemark Gustafson, where he today holds the position of Art Director.



Rian Hughes

Job Title: Creative Director
Clients: McCann Eriksson, Fitch, The Face, Cosmopolitan magazine, DC Comics
Web: www.devicefonts.co.uk

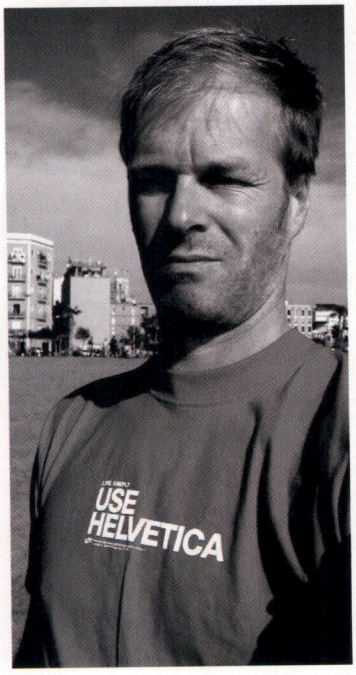
Through Device Fonts, Rian Hughes provides illustration, type, design and animation services to a diverse range of high-profile clients from around the globe. He has also worked extensively in the UK and US comic industry, as illustrator, typographer and designer. That alone deserves a round of applause.



Lars Harmsen

Job Title: Creative Director
Clients: Atomic, Mistral, University Karlsruhe, Guinot Cosmetics
Web: www.volcano-type.de

Born in Hannover, Lars was brought up in Chicago and Geneva before settling in Karlsruhe. He studied history and German at Freiburg before turning to graphic design at Basel University. Co-founder of MAGMA design in 1996 and Volcano Type in 1997, Lars is a prolific and hugely talented designer with a typographic edge.



Jonathan Kenyon, Vault49

Job Title: Creative Director
Clients: Orange, Honda, Nike, MTV, VH1
Web: www.vault49.com

Vault49 has enjoyed a meteoric rise to fame since Jonathan Kenyon and partner John Glasgow set the firm up in 2002. Having swapped London for New York, the duo continue to attract a wide range of clients while refusing to allow their roles to be pigeon-holed or their creative endeavours to be curtailed.

Max Kisman

Job Title: Type Designer, Creative Director
Clients: PRO Broadcasting Networks, Wired Magazine, HotWired, Leo Burnett Technology Group, BBDH
Web: www.maxkisman.com

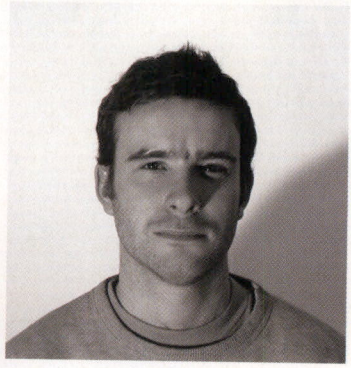
Max Kisman is a typographic pioneer and innovator. Using digital technology in the mid 80s for magazine design, posters and the creation of Red Cross stamps for the Dutch Postal Service, Max became a bit of a firebrand. In 1986, he co-founded TYP/ Typografisch Papier and began a long period of typographic evangelism.

Alan Kitching

Job Title: Freelance Designer, Typographer
Clients: The Guardian, Royal Mail, Computer Arts, Dazed and Confused
Web: www.debutart.com

Alan Kitching is a typographic icon, a don of the illustration world and now, our cover artist. His commitment to the creative use of the letterpress has made him a figure of great stature in the world of typography and design, his ability to send messages a pleasure to witness.

Jeff Knowles



Job Title: Senior Designer
Clients: 4th Estate, Adidas-Salomon, Hankook, ICA, Issey Miyake, Kenzo
Web: www.researchstudios.com

After graduating from the University of Salford, Jeff moved to London and joined Research Studios in autumn 1998, where he is now a Senior Designer. Jeff also has a keen interest in photography and has taken photographs for Segment Systems and The Royal Court Theatre.

Derek Lea

Job Title: Freelance Illustrator
Clients: Computer Arts, Computer Arts Projects, The Toronto Star
Web: www.dereklea.com

Following many years as an art director, Derek Lea stepped across the great divide and became an illustrator. His complex, multi-layered work has been taken to heart by the viewing public in his native Canada and overseas, winning him a wide range of advertising and editorial clients.

Roddy Llewellyn

Job Title: Senior Art Editor
Clients: Computer Arts, Computer Arts Projects, .Net, Cre@te Online
Web: www.computerarts.co.uk

Roddy is the guiding stylistic light for Future's stable of creative titles. A talented illustrator and photographer in his own right, his sure-footed treatment of the artwork and artists that pass before him shows a man with a great eye and a sixth sense for cool.

Bruno Maag

Job Title: Managing Director
Clients: BMW, BT, Land Registry, Tesco, ThyssenKrupp, Telewest Broadband
Web: www.daltonmaag.com

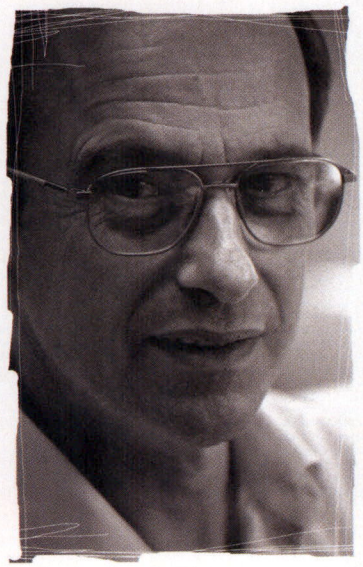
Bruno Maag and Liz Dalton formed Dalton Maag in 1991 upon their return from Chicago, USA where Bruno had been running the custom type department of the Monotype Corporation. Dalton Maag today provides typographic magic to large, multinational corporations.

John McFaul

Job Title: Freelance Illustrator
Clients: Virgin Atlantic, British Airways, Orange, Toyota, The Guardian
Web: www.mcfaul.biz

Mile deep, that's how John describes his work and that's what it is. His colours, his lines and the space in between them are all deep enough to fall into. An artist with many years experience, his work continues to cause sharp inhalations and raised eyebrows around the world.

Robin Nicholas, Monotype



Job Title: Head of Typography
Clients: Scandinavian Airlines, British Airways, Barclays Bank, The British Council
Web: www.monotypeimaging.co.uk

Robin joined the Monotype Type Drawing Office in 1965. During the 80s he developed a bitmap font which later became Arial. He managed the Monotype Drawing Office for ten years before taking up current position as Head of Typography. This man has typography running through his veins.

Henry Obasi

Job Title: Freelance Illustrator
Clients: Firetrap, Channel 4, Playstation, Kangol, Carhartt
Web: www.ppaint.net

Henry Obasi's work depicts a world which is cool without being clichéd. The kind of world in which the characters rock on their heels, look down at you and ask whether you have the credentials to be present. His original style has been favoured by an appropriately 'with it' clientele.

Justus Oehler, Pentagram

Job Title: Principal, Pentagram Berlin
Clients: Tiscali, Citibank Europe, Star Alliance, National Portrait Gallery
Web: www.pentagram.com

Justus has been involved with the development, application and implementation of corporate and brand identities across all media, for the last 15 years. A partner at Pentagram since 1995, he established the company's Berlin office in 2003. He's a graphic design big hitter.

Jim Richardson, Sumo Design

Job Title: Creative Director
Clients: Barclays, National Trust, Newcastle University, Novartis, RIBA, Shetland Museum and Archives
Web: www.sumodesign.co.uk

Jim Richardson runs Newcastle-based design studio SUMO, an 11-strong agency working in corporate, cultural and heritage sectors. Jim has spoken at design conferences in Europe and America and his award winning work has been published in books and magazines around the world.

Peter Saville

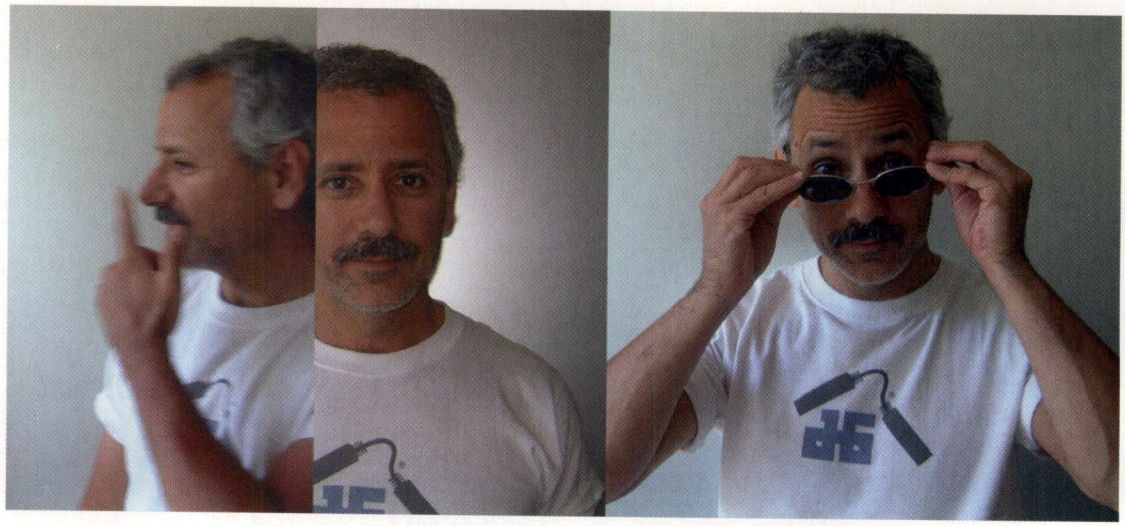
Job Title: Creative Director
Clients: Yohji Yamamoto, Gucci, London Design Museum, EMI
Web: www.saville-associates.com

Former Art Director and Co-founder of Factory Records, Peter Saville has created recognisably iconic designs for some of the biggest names in music, fashion and the arts. His ability to find new solutions to old problems continues to make Saville Associates a force to be reckoned with.

Carlos Segura

Job Title: Founder, Principal
Clients: Citibank, Ernst & Young, Karl Lagerfeld, Hugo Boss, Nintendo
Web: www.segura-inc.com

When he established Segura Inc. in 1991 Carlos Segura brought with him over a decade of advertising experience as a successful Art Director for many of the US advertising giants such as Young & Rubicam, Ketchum and Bayer. His design work at Segura Inc. has won him international recognition, while T-26 keeps the typographic angle covered.



Tom Skipp

Job Title: Designer, GQ Style
Clients: EMI, Stella McCartney, New Order
Web: www.tomskipp.com

Tom Skipp hasn't put a foot wrong since he left college. First at Form, then V23 and most recently alongside Howard Wakefield at Saville Associates, where he had a hand in the re-brand of music giant EMI. His work has an elegance which he is now busy deploying as the designer on *GQ Style*.

Jason Smith, Fontsmith

Job Title: Founder,
Clients: Channel 4, E4, British Gas, Powergen, Post Office
Web: www.fontsmith.com

The man behind such high profile typographic events as the launch of E4 and the rebrand of Channel 4 is currently busy expanding the Fontsmith Library of typefaces. He likes a laugh as much as the next man, but his typography is uncompromisingly excellent.

Neil Summerour

Job Title: Founder and Creative Director
Clients: HP, Proctor & Gamble, Compaq, Disney, MTV
Web: www.positype.com

Neil Summerour began developing typefaces in 1996 with the 1996 Olympic Brick Paver Project's proprietary typeface. Since then he has released more than 250 typefaces. He is the Operating Partner and Senior Designer of interactive, design, and marketing firm Sliced Bread. Neil established the digital type design and lettering studio, Positype, in 2002.

Jeremy Tankard

Job Title: Type Designer
Clients: Adobe, Microsoft, British Council, Wolff Olins, Indesit, Iceland
Web: www.typography.net

After graduating from the Royal College of Art more than a decade ago, Jeremy Tankard proceeded to make a name for himself as a designer of elegant, unique typefaces while working for agencies like Wolff Olins and Addison Design. He set up Jeremy Tankard Typography in 1998 and continues to explore the boundaries of type from his Lincolnshire base.

Ed Templeton, Red Design

Job Title: Creative Director
Clients: Fatboy Slim, Lodown, Radio One, Quantic, Bonobo, Lucky Jim
Web: www.red-design.co.uk

Ed Templeton is one of the three red-haired designers who set up Red Design back in 1996. Specialists in print media for a 'youth' market, the Brighton-based outfit is busy expanding its repertoire into moving image, web, illustration and anything else that takes its fancy. Red Design is cool.

Autumn Whitehurst

Job Title: Freelance Illustrator
Clients: Vogue Italia, Elle, Penguin Books, DNA Studios, Cosmogirl, Computer Arts
Web: www.art-dept.com

The silky, smooth skinned beauty of Autumn Whitehurst's imagery is as undeniably alluring as it is distinctive. But there isn't a hint of the fly-away flimsiness which fashion illustration frequently succumbs to, there's steam rising from these pages. Autumn is hot. ca-p

30
Rules
of
Type
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
0123456789
!@#$%^&*()_+-=[]{}:;"'|\<>,.?/~`¢£¥§

Specials
apsotophe
comma
parenthesis
braces
square brackets
hyphen
en dash
em dash
underscore
colon
semicolon
solidus
backslash
ellipsis
exclamation
question mark
greater then
less than
guillemets
prime
double prime
double quotes
single quotes
overdot
midpoint
period
bullet
addition
substarction
multiplication
division
per cent
per million
octothorp
equal
degree
ring
acute
grave
umlaut
circumflex
tilde
breve
cedilla
asterisk
pilcrow
eszett
aesc
yen
sterling
dollar
euro
at
trademark
copyright
ampersand
dagger
double dagger
section
omega
infinity
fist

Classification
black letter
gothic
old english
block
broken
serif
roman
antigua
old style venetian
humanist
old style aldine
garaldles
old style dutch
old style revival
transitional
didone
slab serif
egyptian
clarendon
glyphic
san-serif
gothic
lineale
grotesque
neo grotesque
geometric
humanistic
square
script
decorative
graphic type

Typeface
cap height
x-height
ascender
decender
baseline
apex
bar
bowl
stress
arm
ball
arch
stroke
overhang
overshoot
hairline
tail
counter
ear
stem
link
loop
shoulder
serif
terminal

Type
kerning
leading
hyphenation
justification
tracking
baseline
x-height
meanline
lowercase
uppercase
small caps
title
fractions
ligatures
monospaced
proportional
lining numerals
non-aligning numerals
old style numerals

Weights
thin
light
roman
medium
bold
black
plain
italic
oblique
condensed
extended

Measurements
point
em
pica
didot
cicero

Discover everything you need to know about typography from the world's best type designers...

Typography is not a subject that can be taken lightly. It's one of the most important – if not *the* most important – areas of design. Any designer, illustrator or digital artist should take type very seriously. In this, the first section of this special collector's issue, we bring you the advice of ten typographic masters, including Bruno Maag, Jeremy Tankard, Rian Hughes and Jason Smith.

By reading these 30 type tips, you'll glean knowledge from the best in the business. For instance: Bruno Maag dishes out advice on the importance of good spacing; Jeremy Tankard on the need to test, test and test again; Rian Hughes on the fact that you can never have too many fonts; and Jason Smith on the need to give as much attention to the negative space as the positive.

Simply put, there's loads of essential information for anyone interested in improving their type design, and typographic skills. And if you're reading this, that should be you...

01

The joys of hot metal

Bruno Maag

Picking up a brush and ink by hand (rather than via computer) is the way to really get to know your curves

> "I'm often asked if I think type was better before the Macintosh," says Bruno Maag, one half of type foundry Dalton Maag. "Let me make this clear – I don't subscribe to the opinion that everything done by hand and in hot metal is superior to digital type." Even so, Bruno's here to tell you that the Mac alone is not the answer.

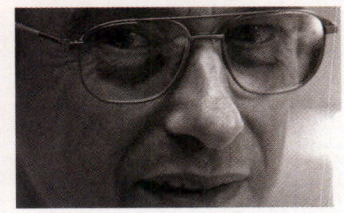
The Mac is a liberation, a great tool, but, says Bruno, "A great tool is only worth anything if you know what you're doing." It's important to get a feel for your subject: "Students should take the time at college to render type by hand."

That's how it works for interns at Dalton Maag: "The first thing they have to do is go down the local stationery shop and buy two small/medium size brushes, and black and white gouache."

This is not intended to be learning by rote: "Drawing key letters, by hand, at 100mm cap height instils a sense for the shapes of the letters." Since they are nought but shapes, that's crucial. "It sharpens the eye for the detail as much as the whole," says Bruno. All this hand work will, oddly, help you get the most from your on-screen experience: "You simply know what a curve looks like."

Painting letter shapes will give you a greater understanding of form and a crucial eye for detail.

02



Dressed to impress

Robin Nicholas

Typefaces have individual characters which suit certain roles better than others...

> For Robin Nicholas, Head of Typography at Monotype, choosing typefaces is like dressing a piece of work correctly. "Each typeface has a personality or image of its own," he explains. "This needs to be carefully matched to the work being set."

Robin expands on his sartorial analogy: "At the traditional end of the spectrum there are brogue shoes and tweed jackets, which might be compared with Times New Roman or Century." They've been tested by time and found to be more than resilient.

If you have a younger audience, says Robin, "There's the latest from the designer labels, which might be equated to FF Strada or Neo Sans." Your challenge is to dress the ages and tastes in the appropriate typeface. And with something like 50,000 typefaces on the market, Robin points out: "There is certainly no shortage of choice!"

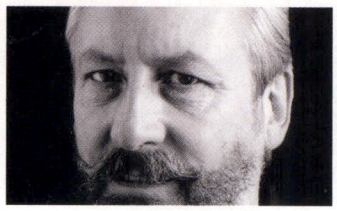
Like chess, the rules are easy enough to learn but the play itself rapidly outdistances many, so Robin gives us a starter for ten: "For serious documents, such as financial reports, Helvetica or Times would be fine. For glossy magazines aimed at the young, Dax or Neo would be appropriate." And what of the silver foxes out there? "Magazines aimed at the slightly more mature might use Palatino or Frutiger."

Typefaces, like people, have characteristics all of their own. Keep looking till you find a face that fits.

Aspiration	**Broker**	Thunder	**Burner**
Qualitative	Monochromatic	*Cumulus*	Temperature
Molecular	**Physiotherapists**	Feather	**Degrees**
Adjudicate	Relinquished	*Garment*	**Segment**
Crystalise	**Slingshot**	Fashion	**Citrus**
Knowledge	**Transposer**	*Sparkling*	**Zesty**
Seahorse	Insulation	**Crystal**	**Sharp**
Byzantine	**Reactor**	***Sodium***	**Shaving**
Exhaust	***Plentiful***	**Pepper**	Cream
Plentiful	Decorate	***Wasabi***	CAKES
Walnuts	RAILWAY	**Inferno**	

"Each font has a personality or image of its own"
Robin Nicholas

03



Light type bad, bold type good

Alan Kitching

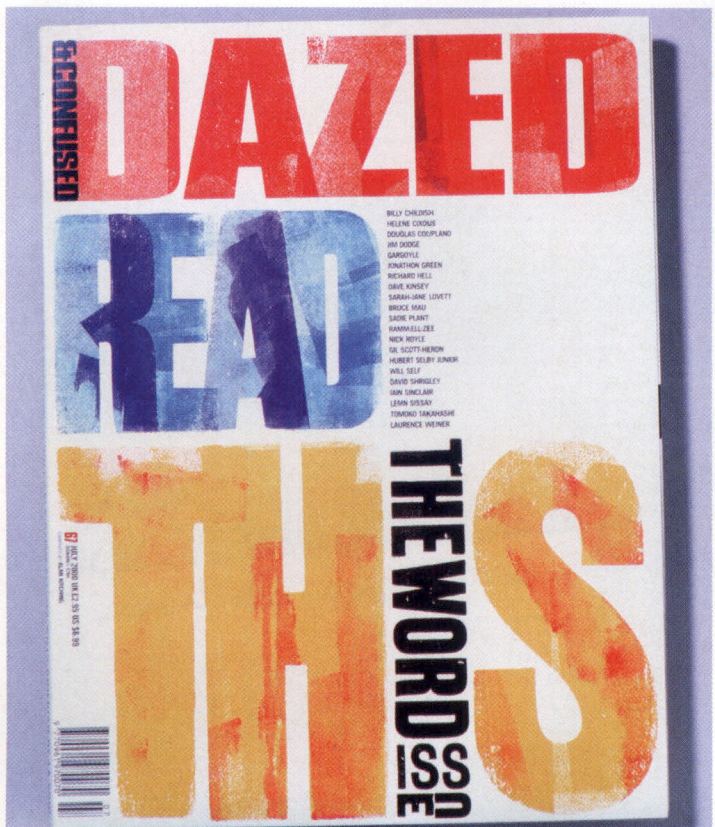
"Don't use light type when you can use bold." Alan Kitching is a lover of the bolder type...

> It sounds a little like a prejudice, and perhaps it is: "I've never liked light type," begins the inimitable Alan Kitching. "It's an anomaly in the history of typography." It's a well-considered prejudice though, one that has had time to mature. Alan gives in and explains: "Light type came in with your sans serifs, the likes of your Univers in about 1958." This makes it sound like this particular type weighting slipped in the back door while everyone was round the front shaking hands with Adrian Frutiger.

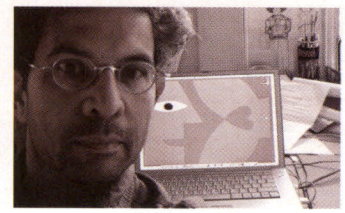
It's the old mountaineering argument: light type came into existence because it could be done, "because they can design all these great ranges of type," continues Alan, "from extra bold, through all the variants." Without wishing to sound prejudicial, "It's a typically Swiss thing."

He relents a little saying, "They can go through all these shades of grey." It's unclear whether 'they' are the fonts or the Swiss. "You could argue that they are useful for different levels of information," but we know that isn't what Alan's thinking. "I could have said don't use any more than three weights of type." This is a plea for elegance and simplicity.

As this 2000 cover for *Dazed & Confused* shows, Alan Kitching likes to work with bold, bright type.



04



Font of knowledge

Max Kisman

Type moves through time, cataloguing and marking different eras in our development...

> Max Kisman is keen that we understand the development of type, the way it has been transformed and in turn contributes to our continued transformation as a society.

"Since its invention in 1436, by Gutenberg, production of type was an inaccessible, specialists empire," says Max, relaxing into a history lesson. "Its sacred code was only whispered between those who solemnly pledge their oath of faith.

"In the 20th century, the process of type production has been broken open and individualised by computer technology." Power moved away from the secretive guilds: "The point of gravity shifted to decentralisation and individualisation of production and distribution." Type was free!

"Typography now moves between the far corners of hand-drawn calligraphy and the electrified pixilated maze of computer screens," says Max poetically. "We are constantly changing the way we live, work, play and communicate. Information is brought to us by radio, television, newspapers, email, websites, mobile phones... In their endless variety, letters are still part of it. Typography continuously needs to be redefined."

Max Kisman continues to redefine the role of typography in society.

05

Just can't get enough

Rian Hughes

There is no point at which we will have too many fonts, says Rian Hughes in response to suggestions otherwise

> Typographers have to put up with more than their fair share of stupid questions, none of which is more upsetting than the perennial, "Why are you making another font when there's already too many of them to choose from?"

Rian Hughes is incensed. "How can there be too many typefaces in the world?" he asks. "Are there too many songs, too many books?" He has a point. "What about new places to go?" You cannot ever have enough new fonts, it seems.

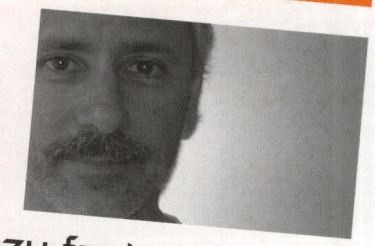
"Even after x-thousand fonts have been designed, typographers are still finding new expressive ways to twist the basic Roman letter shapes," says Rian. But unless you're willing to look properly, you won't be aware of these innovations. If that's true though, you probably don't like visiting new places or listening to new songs either.

It's a subtle thing, but type design imparts something important to the words it gives form to. "Expressive typography, 'tones of voice', are becoming more varied," explains Rian. A more varied world is what we want, because there's already too much homogeneity.

ABSINTHE
CHANTAL
DAUPHINE
drexler
Dynasty
Egret
Electrasonic
Galaxie
Galicia
Glitterati
CUSTO
INTERCEPTOR
Miserichordia
MONNOM
Moonstone
PAYLOAD
Pitshanger
Radiogram
Rogue Sans
Rogue Serif
SPARROWHAWK
Straker

With so many 'tones of voice' to express, Rian Hughes is never short of new font ideas.

06



Favourite font = lazy font

Carlos Segura

Never fall into the trap of choosing a default font. There's always just the right font for the job in hand...

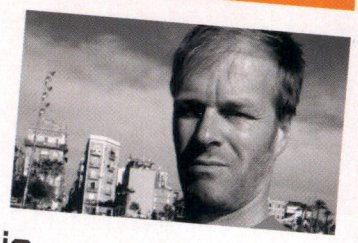
> As a typographer of world renown, Carlos Segura is often asked which is his favourite font. "I find myself feeling troubled by the question," he confesses. Reading between the lines, "What I'm actually hearing is: 'What font can I safely use as a default?'" That's the wrong question to be asking Carlos.

His answer, of course, is that he has no favourite font, and he adds: "Furthermore, I think it's somewhat dangerous to have one." In case you have to ask why, he continues: "Because I believe you should use the appropriate font for the project. And there is one out there for it." You just have to look for it if you don't already know what it is.

What you'll get from finding the right font is a meaningful work, explains Carlos: "The proper font can change the 'body language' of the page." His analogy is spot on: "It's similar to how the score can change the mood of a film." Typography has so much to offer once its secrets are unlocked: "It is more than a vehicle to carry words."

Search long and hard for the right typeface for the job. Never resort to a default, or favourite, font.

07



Fonts are like music

Lars Harmsen

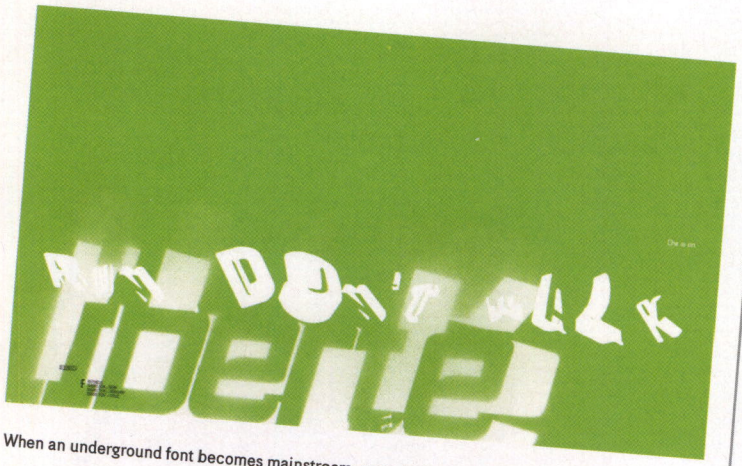
Finding Rosewood in the *Photoshop* font menu is like seeing your favourite underground act support Britney...

> Lars Harmsen has spotted something interesting about typography: "Type is quite similar to music." The story of how this observation came about is revealing.

"My record collection is like a diary," begins Lars. "I am neither a fashion-victim nor one who listens to the music of their youth till the end of their lives." Sadly, though, these types make up the majority of the listening public and this puts Lars into a state: "I hate German radio for being so mainstream-boring..." At this point he has to take a breather.

With his breath under control, Lars goes on: "I love discovering music nobody else listens to and sharing this experience with my friends." That seems like a reasonable admission. "But when a band or songwriter suddenly turns mainstream I depreciate it." If it's not a nugget of hidden gold, sieved from the dross of experience, Lars ain't interested.

Now the link with typography can be revealed: "Beside classic faces which I use again and again, there are a lot more that I employ intensively for a certain period and then never touch again." The appearance of Rosewood in *Photoshop's* font menu was enough to cause Lars to worry that "this wonderful font would be robbed of its virginity pretty soon." It's time for us to move on.



When an underground font becomes mainstream, some typographers will never use it again.

08

Pocket pal

Jason Smith

Get into the habit of using a notebook. The freedom it offers is a contrast to the controlled environment of the computer

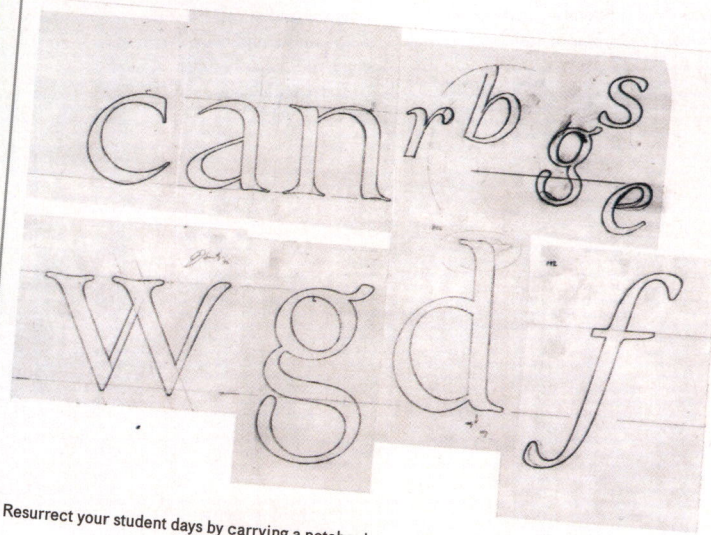
> "Remember when you were a student?" asks Jason Smith. When you used to keep a notebook for ideas? Well, that never stopped being a good thing to do.

"Buy a decent notebook for ideas and draw, doodle, use ink, pencils, anything that will help free up your way of thinking about letterforms," says Jason. Even though you may have graduated from college, you never stop learning. You should constantly be exploring your chosen field: "Just experiment and play around."

Make it a habit to record your musings: "I've always kept a notebook for everything... writing ideas, doodles, calligraphy," says the man behind the Fontsmith type foundry. You name it, it's all there, just waiting to be employed at a later date. Or not.

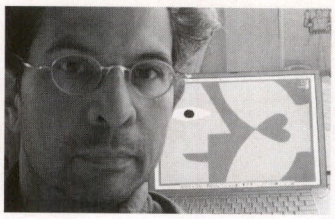
"Drawing stuff is much freer than working directly on the computer, because on the Mac you're kind of forced to design something," adds Jason. Without that constraint, the old creative juices might just flow in the right direction. If you have creative block when you're in front of the Mac, "sitting on the train doodling away frees your hand up."

It doesn't really matter what it is: "An interesting kind of serif or just an idea. It could end there or if you apply it to a design you're doing the next day, you have something else." If you don't do it, you'll never know; if you do, "something may come out of it."



Resurrect your student days by carrying a notebook and jotting down all your ideas.

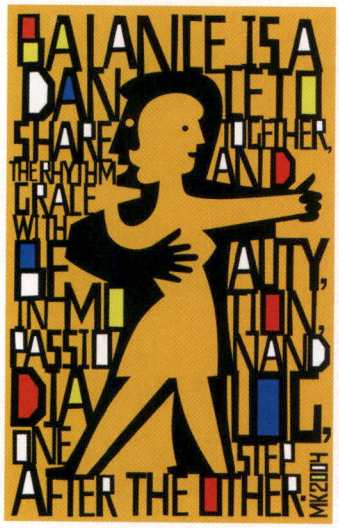
09



Balance in composition

Max Kisman

It can be a struggle to understand and apply this graphic language, so pay attention...



Find the right balance between information, images, text and graphic forms.

> "To me, the quality in design, illustration and typography is defined by the balance of composition," says Max Kisman. He's top typographic brass, so it pays to sit up and listen. In this context, "Composition is the arrangement of personal and cultural expressions in a contemporary appropriate visual language."

Repeating that three times a day will cure a stammer, but what does it mean? "In design, that would be the balance in the use, direction and editing of image and text." That's much clearer. "In illustration, that would be the visual arrangement of meaningful symbols and information." Okay, still with you. "In typography, it would be the visual arrangement of meaningful graphic forms."

So, it's the orchestration of meaning, the ability to convey information with elegance. "That said," adds Max, "the quality of youth is energy and the quality of experience is maturity." It's not entirely obvious where Max is going with this. "Yet, a powerful visual vocabulary that overlaps these territories depends on its right articulation in timing (composition) and simplification (language)," he concludes. Answers on a postcard please.

"Composition is the arrangement of personal and cultural expressions"
Max Kisman

10

Love your characters

Bruno Maag

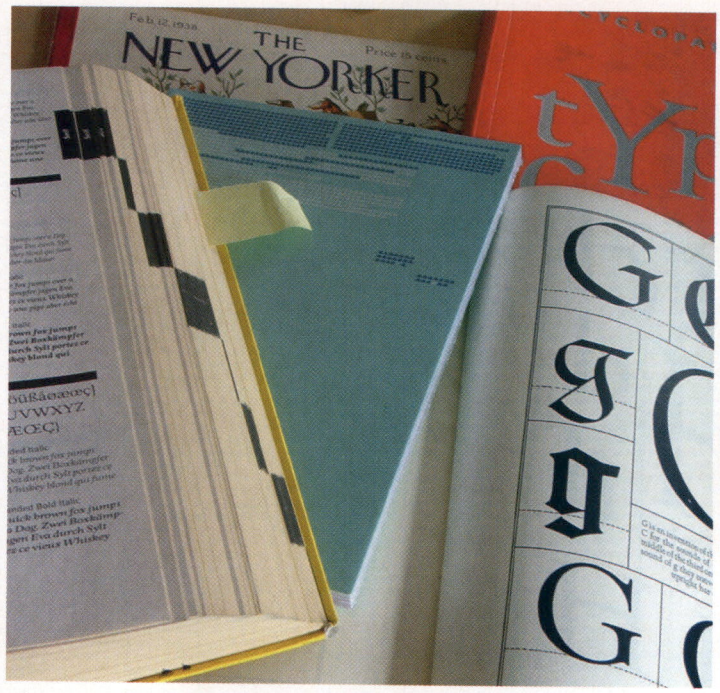
Bruno Maag says you need to love your characters to be able to fully express yourself typographically

> The esteemed type designer Bruno Maag assures us that, "Characters are living creatures that can only be tamed with love and tender care." He says that you should get to know them: "Make the serif your friend, the English script your lover." Steady on Bruno, we're not actually on the continent you know.

"Most grid-style typefaces have the aesthetic qualities of a concrete bollard and they certainly don't read easy," so Bruno suggests you broaden your horizons: "Overcome your deep horror of the soft curve and unpredictable width." Take a cold shower, for example: once you get over the initial shock, you'll like it and it's very good for you.

"Make yourself type-literate, know your type classification," says Bruno. "Learn to express yourself typographically." Once you get beyond what comes installed on your Mac, it will make more sense. Now Bruno goes for the clincher: "Spend £20 on a font – it will be one of your most worthwhile investments in your life."

It's the final frontier, paying for your pleasure. "Think about it," pleads Bruno: "You spend £20 on a takeaway for two. And it's over in an hour. A typeface is forever." Well, what are you waiting for?



Spend £20 on a new typeface now, and you'll have a friend you can love for life.

11

Size does matter

Alan Kitching

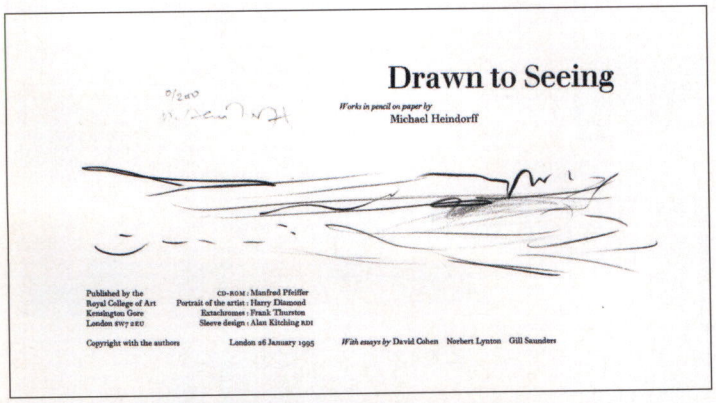
For Alan Kitching, three is a magic number when it comes to how many type sizes should be used in a job

> "Use only three sizes of type." Its quite an uncompromising stance from Alan Kitching, the world renowned illustrator and typographer. He's well aware there may be disagreement among the ranks, but he's adamant: "There aren't many jobs when you need more than three sizes, I wouldn't think.

"Looking at the things in front of me," he says, confident that the world will not contradict him, "there's a book with two, a leaflet with three." It's a useful experiment, one which you might want to repeat, now.

"When you look at things," explains Alan, "in general, there aren't that many sizes used anyway." Alan, known for his deft use of type, is edging toward saying that typography has naturally established the three sizes rule; all he's doing is pointing it out. "Three doesn't seem very many but, in fact, there's small, big and medium." What else are you going to need?

"It's a rule of thumb," adds Alan. "If you're doing a poster, you want a big headline, some medium and some small text somewhere." That covers all your bases. "Anything in-between can just get in the way." It's far too easy to confuse matters, a common failing for the novice.


Drawn to Seeing
Works in pencil on paper by
Michael Heindorff
Published by the
Royal College of Art
Kensington Gore
London SW7 2EU
CD-ROM : Manfred Pfeiffer
Portrait of the artist : Harry Diamond
Extachromes : Frank Thurston
Sleeve design : Alan Kitching RDI
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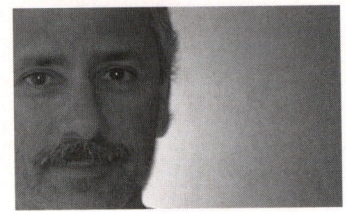
London 26 January 1995
With essays by David Cohen Norbert Lynton Gill Saunders

Three different sizes of font is the most you should use for any project: big, medium and small.

"In general, there aren't that many sizes used"
Alan Kitching

12



Observe your surroundings

Carlos Segura

Keep your eyes open as you pass through the world, because you never know when inspiration will strike...

> If Carlos Segura is right when he says, "Inspiration comes from curiosity," there's no excuse for walking around in a daydream. You have to engage with the world if you want your work to be relevant.

"A story I often tell happened in New York on a business trip with a client," says Carlos. "We were walking in the middle of Manhattan and came to a cross walk." While crossing the street with all the other pedestrians at the height of rush hour, Carlos stopped in the middle of the street, looked down and took a photo.

A few minutes later, the client asked Carlos what this photographing the floor at inappropriate moments was all about. He elaborates: "I began to explain to him that while crossing the street, I noticed that the manhole cover had 'Made in India' on it, and that I found it amazing that we had to go to India to get NY manhole covers." The client was suitably impressed.

"We often walk through life not noticing our surroundings and we let so much pass us by." Carlos finds this situation sad: "We need to make an effort to 'see' more."

Look at the world around you, and if you see something that inspires you, photograph it.

Type

13

Give every part the same attention

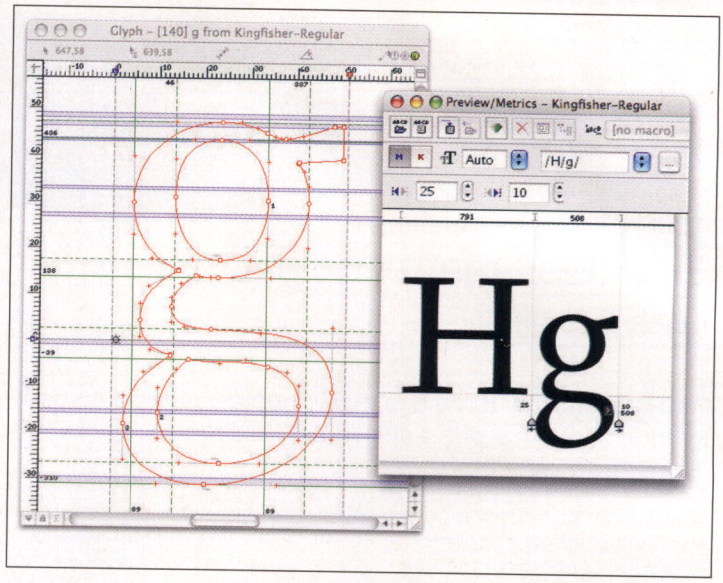
Jeremy Tankard

No element of your typeface can be treated as a mere formality. Attention to detail is key in type design...

> "There's so much involved in the development of a typeface that it's easy to get to a stage where you just start to accept the initial forms without much enquiry." Jeremy Tankard thinks this may be a new kind of blindness: "Type blindness?"

It's important that you don't succumb to this peculiar form of ocular disability. Effective type design requires you to: "Always give as much attention to a full stop as you do to a lowercase g." Don't let up on your standards, even for that little dot: "Each element is as important as the other."

And if you're lacking inspiration, there's a mountain of possibilities out there so don't just fudge your work: "Look to other creative areas such as music, the concept of musical tone poems." And a great suggestion from Jeremy: "See how Beethoven wrote down a score compared to Stockhausen or Schönberg."



Don't spend all your time designing the interesting looking letters and ignoring the punctuation.

The actual purpose of a typeface hasn't changed. "It still needs to convey information to the brain," says Jeremy. So look to history. Every aspect of every alphabet has been deeply considered many times. You have to learn how to apply those considerations to your own work — not just part of it, but all of it.

14

You're on your own

Jason Smith

Mutilating other people's work does not count as type design, so don't waste your time

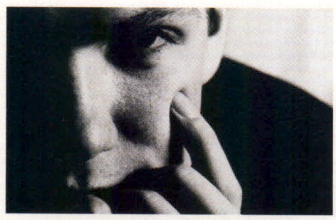
> If you're ever going to make a mark, you have to follow your own star, plough your own furrow. So, says Jason Smith, "Forget what your peers are doing and don't under any circumstances open up someone else's font and start knocking bits off."

The reasoning behind this advice is about as simple as it gets: "It'll look shit and wholly unoriginal." That is not the way to win favour in any walk of life, and in type design it's almost taboo.

But still it goes on: "There's a great tendency for young type designers to think they've designed a typeface by pumping up Times New Roman and whacking the serifs off or putting a filler around Helvetica," says an exasperated Fontsmith.

And if you're thinking it might count as practice, you're wrong: "You're just learning software and, the thing is, you're a designer and not an IT geek." Not that there's anything wrong with IT geeks you understand. It's just that, "The whole point of doing this is design, not learning software." So, to sum up: "It's not real work so just don't do it." Okay?

At Fontsmith, type design is about creating original fonts, not tweaking other people's typefaces.



Rian Hughes

17

Be consistent

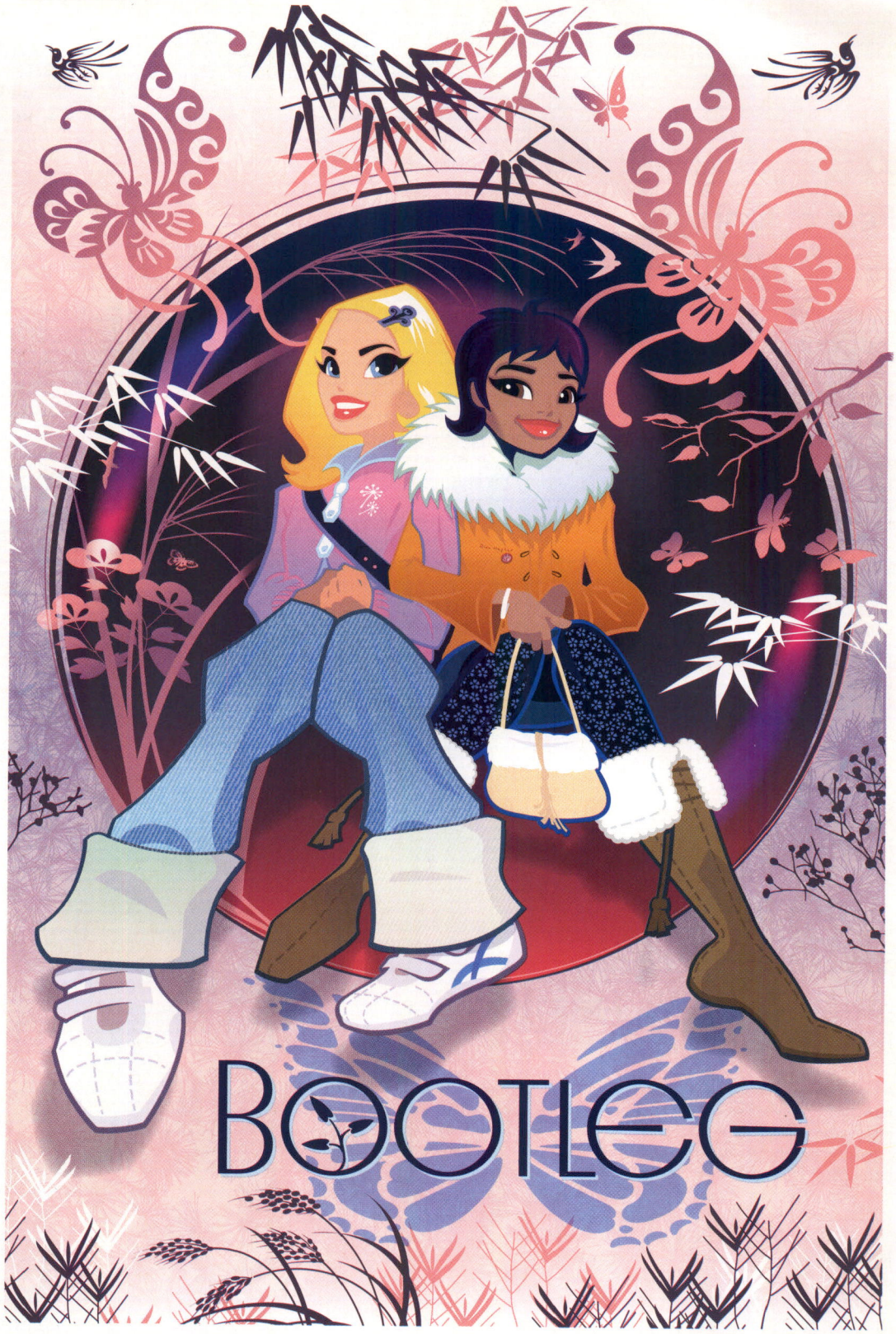
There are rules which even distressed type must adhere to if it's to produce serviceable typography...

> Distressed type does not come about by letting ordinary typography out of doors during a fireworks display. Like all things typographical, there needs to be a method behind the apparent madness. "Even a distressed font must fall apart according to some consistent set of rules," concludes Rian Hughes.

This type design staple was popularised by the eminent David Carson during his time at *Raygun* magazine, where the ideals of legibility in type design were finally overrun in the name of style. But that isn't to say there was no rational thinking behind the process of distress.

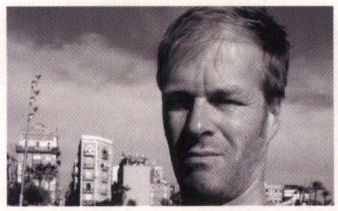
On the graphic side, "things like weight thickness, stroke terminals and so on" cannot be monkeyed with if you want your type designs to actually work as type designs rather than just designs. Meanwhile, what Rian determines as the 'atmosphere' a font projects must also maintain a certain internal consistency. "This is paramount to give a font a fully formed character," he says.

"Internal consistency, adhering to graphic and conceptual principles," says Rian, are essentials which cannot be ignored, even when you want to look like you're ignoring them.



Whether you're creating clean lines or distressed effects, there needs to be consistency in your working methods.

15



Fear of fonts

Lars Harmsen

Creating your own fonts gives you valuable insight into the finer points of design, so embrace it...

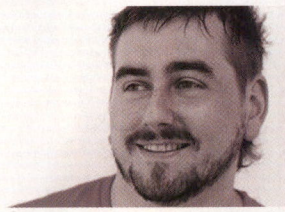
> Volcano Type's Lars Harmsen is in a reflective mood. "I remember an exercise in art school at Basel," he recalls. "We had to cut once into a black 4x4cm square of paper and then fold it into a new shape." Stay focused, it's a slow-burner this one.

"I found it quite boring at that time," says Lars, musing on how these things deliver their insight so long after the event, "but it's a great lesson." From that simple action thousands of shapes were possible, each telling their creator something new. "It's just a great and simple way to learn about shapes, left-overs, inner-rooms, black and white."

For Lars, the insight gained is invaluable and extends to the entire design process. "I don't consider type design as something that is only for the old hands," he says as an example of this. "The personal experience, even if it doesn't lead to a perfect or 'really new' typeface, is great training."

Personal experience is something you'll draw on to produce work "with harmony and balance."

16



Justification

Jim Richardson

Don't let computers make a mockery of your careful typography: "Justified is just wrong!"

> There are plenty of ways to make your typography shine, but there are just as many pitfalls waiting to trip you up. A significant portion of these pitfalls are the result of computers attempting to do human jobs, and of laziness.

Justification is one of these things. "Justified is just wrong!" exclaims Jim Richardson. No two ways about it. Jim explains: "Computer programs create justified text by stretching and squeezing the space between letters." Not only is this an affront to all the hard work you've put in deciding on those spaces, but, says Jim, "It makes the text harder to read and looks ugly."

So next time you're tempted to justify your text, think again, because the computer will make even the nicest font look wrong if you leave it to its own devices. There is a right way of dealing with this though: "Left justified text is the professional way to create columns of text." Don't get lazy.

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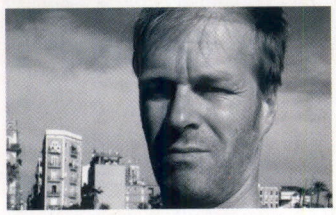
Type designers hate it when you justify their lovingly created font, so always range it left.



Lars Harmsen

18

The wisdom of illegibility

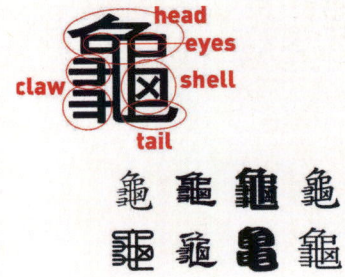
Make an effort to understand the nature of the symbols you're confronted with...

> By the time spring sprang in Karlsruhe, the Volcano type foundry was out of the gates and over the hill. "We'd been in Hong Kong," relates Lars Harmsen, "working on our Bastard-Project." Team Volcano had been doing "research on cultural identity."

The members of the foundry had just arrived in Hong Kong hotfoot from Tokyo, and felt quite hungry, so their guide, the type designer John Wu, took them to a small street-bar and ordered a local soup. "It tasted wonderful," remembers Lars, but something caught his eye: "I noticed that there were the same letters on the menu and the huge stockpot." There are no flies on Lars.

Lars interrogated the guide as to the meaning of these symbols: "John smiled and answered 'Turtle. See here: the shell, the legs, the head'." The shock was enough to put poor Lars into capitals, "WE HAD TURTLE-SOUP!!!!"

From that day, the plucky typographer tried to 'read' Chinese, especially in restaurants." Who can blame him? "I was hoping to discover snakes, dogs or whatever." In the end, however, Lars concluded that ignorance is bliss.



Understanding the symbols around you can prevent you from embarrassing situations in Chinese restaurants.

Jim Richardson

19

Inches are not quotes

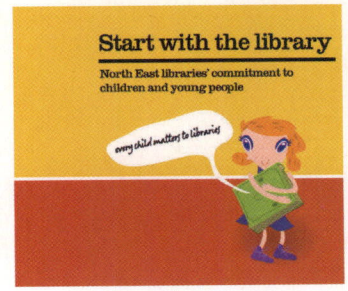
If you confuse these similar punctuation marks, it will mark you out as a novice

> Typography offers the designer so many ways to experiment that the mind boggles. There are infinite permutations of letterform variations, combinations and applications.

However, there are also some things that do not vary, which mark out the typographer from the dabbler. One of these, says Jim Richardson, is knowing the difference between a speech mark and an inch mark.

"Using inch marks instead of speech marks is bad English and is a real giveaway that a designer doesn't take care of detail," says Jim. It's really quite simple: "Quote marks look different in different fonts, but generally they should look like '66' at the start of a quote and '99' at the end." Swapping these for Imperial measurements is not clever.

Jim also highlights a related pitfall: "The apostrophe is also easy to get wrong." Once again there's a numerical clue to help you: "This should generally look like a '9' or a raised comma." It's the job of a good typographer to be on top of these details.



Apostrophes, like speech marks, should be curly rather than straight.

Jeremy Tankard

20

Test, test, test

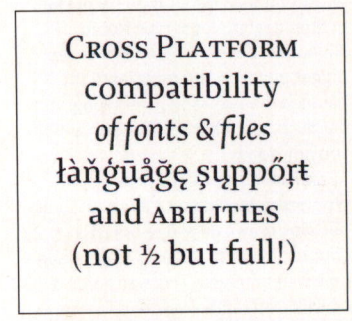
Applications and operating systems all treat fonts differently, so test yours widely...

> If you've designed a lovely new font, seen to the spacing, looked after the kerning and taken care of the hinting, it would be a shame to see it butchered by unaccommodating software. So Jeremy Tankard lays down the law: "Before a type can be said to be finished it must be tested."

And testing must be rigorous: "It's not enough to test it on one application." Your new typeface could be used anywhere: "It needs to be tested on as many as you can and on both Mac and Windows." You should cover all the options.

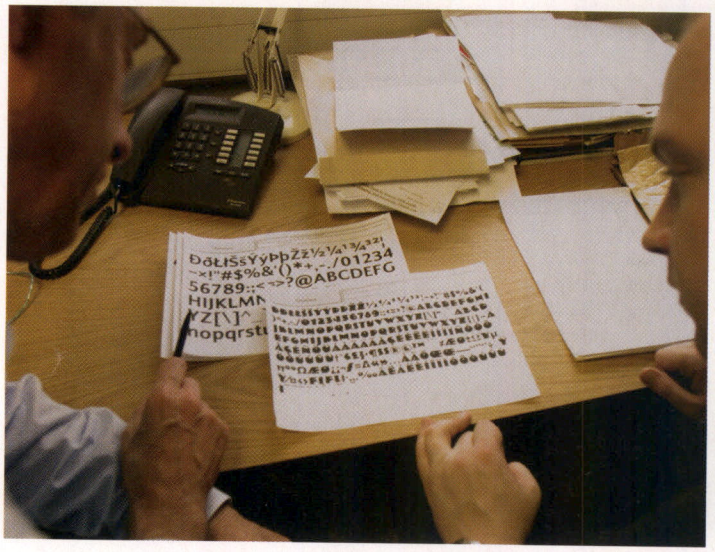
It's a shame, but there is very little uniformity: "All applications handle fonts differently. They use different parts of the naming structure to identify them and different rendering technologies are used across applications and platforms." Nothing, notes Jeremy, can be taken for granted.

Even so, not all the problems can be solved. "The best practice is to test against standards," says Jeremy. These may be the system core fonts of Windows and Mac or Adobe fonts, but there's no way to guarantee compatibility in every situation.

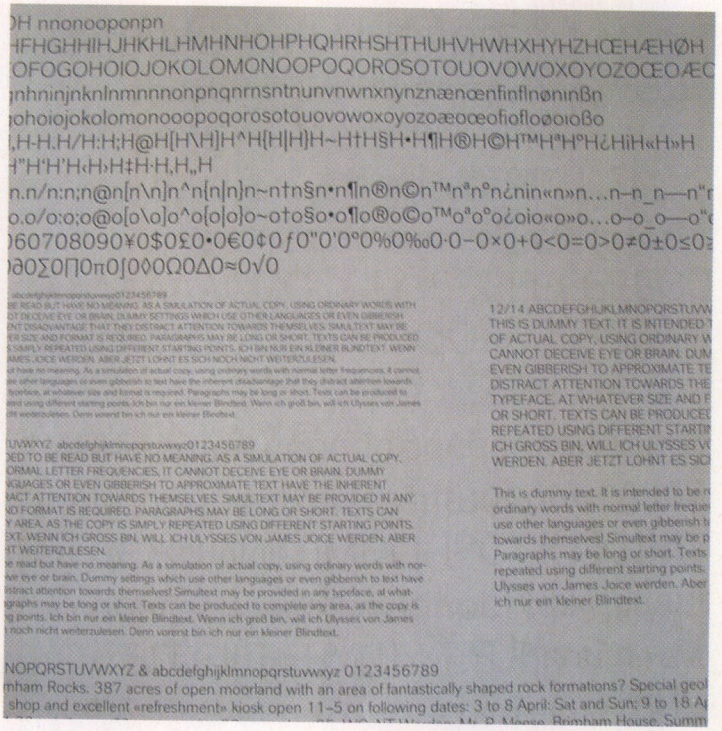


Fully test your fonts. Here a file is opened on a Mac to check that it is compatible.

"Ensure that design features can be consistently applied"
Robin Nicholas



It's easy to get stuck in the minute details of font design, so sketch out the full alphabet early.



When spacing fonts, don't use minus tracking. "It does not make the type look better," says Bruno.

21

Keep your eye on the ball

Robin Nicholas

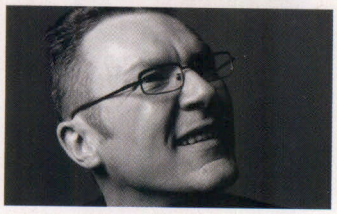
You must constantly struggle to unify the large and small-scale worlds of type design...

> "Attention to detail is all-important in type design," observes Robin Nicholas, "but don't lose sight of the bigger picture." You must learn to balance the two aspects of typography because neither one on its own will do you any good.

As Robin points out, "Many typefaces start life as a few characters, perhaps drawn as a logo or just a couple of words." It's easy to get caught up in the minutiae. This way holds a classic trap for the unwary: "Losing sight of how well the typeface will work overall, particularly if it is to be used for setting text."

Robin can't stop this from happening all the time but he has a suggestion that might help: "Try sketching out the full alphabets in fairly rough form at an early stage." This will give you a chance to direct the development of your font: "To ensure that design features can be consistently applied and that an overall harmonious effect is being achieved."

22



Time and space

Bruno Maag

"Take time spacing a typeface," says Bruno Maag. "There's nothing more embarrassing than a poorly spaced font"

> Aspirant type designers beware: all those elegant curves will amount to nothing if you fail to space your letters correctly. Bruno Maag concedes: "You can get away with a few characters that are drawn a bit dodgy." But that's as far as it goes. "Never, ever, will a badly spaced font look good," he adds

"Spacing the font properly will save you a lot of time kerning it," reasons the voice of typographic experience. While spacing refers to the space between all characters against each other, "Kerning refers only to individual pair combinations that need correcting, such as TA or VA."

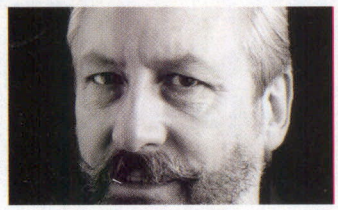
Normally, when you buy a quality font from a reputable foundry or designer, you'll find that the font is perfectly well spaced. "Of course," says Bruno, "at headline sizes you will have to make some amendments, but at text sizes, keep your fingers away from minus tracking." This will only get you into trouble.

"If type is too tightly spaced," explains Bruno, "you will have to use many more kerning pairs to make the setting look good." This is boredom in its pure form. "You're wasting time which you could spend doing exciting things like drinking beer..."

Seeing Alan's bold cover artwork, you can better understand his dislike for small reversed type.

Fill your portfolio with work that reflects who you are and how you want to be perceived.

23



How not to use small serif type

Alan Kitching

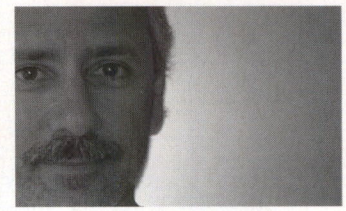
Never reverse small serif or light type out of a solid colour unless you can be sure your printers will get it right

> This problem is a largely technical one, confesses Alan Kitching, but one you need to keep your eye on. "If you have white type on black, it's often reversed out so you're printing the black and the type is the paper showing through," explains Alan. It's entirely possible that this might work wonderfully, except for the fact that it very rarely does.

"It's a bit of a struggle against the technology," explains Alan. It's not so much that this is a bad thing in itself, just that you will more than likely get your work back and it will be totally illegible. "If you have sans serifs, they are going to disappear almost."

"You see it all the time," says Alan with regret. "Unless the register is good, the plates are perfect," your print will encroach on the lines of the type to such a degree that it will break down and become unreadable. "People do it though," agrees Alan, but these must be brave souls not afraid of a re-print.

24



Perfecting your portfolio

Carlos Segura

Make sure your portfolio shows you in a favourable light, and demonstrates the full spectrum of your skills...

> "Be true to yourself," exhorts Carlos Segura. "I know this sounds simple and clichéd but you must build your portfolio to reflect who you want to be, and how you want to be perceived." It's this folio which introduces you to people, so make sure it's saying all the right things.

"Perhaps this is just common sense," says the respected type designer, "but common sense isn't so common any more." It's too easy to give in and show what you think your potential employer will want to see, tell them what they want to hear. Carlos recommends you lose the standard black portfolio with black pages: "Make it personal and full of emotion, and have it say something about what you want to do." Surely that would be more fun anyway?

Carlos cautions that you will always be commissioned to do the type of work that people see in your portfolio: "They're not creative enough to understand that you have the power to take them somewhere they have never been." Be careful what you wish for.

25

Gruesome twosomes

Jim Richardson

Certain combinations of letterforms have presentation issues. The solution is known as a ligature...

> Rather than having been developed according to a logical master plan, the written form of the alphabet has evolved. This means that certain combinations of letters 'interfere' with one another. This is where ligatures come in. "Ligatures are your friend," says Jim Richardson.

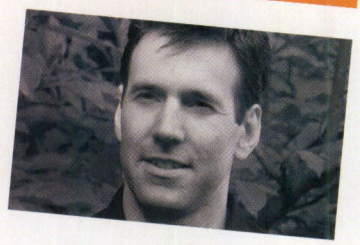
"A ligature is a set of two or more characters that have been designed to fit together as a set." The word itself means 'to bind' and refers to the bond itself, whether a bandage, a cord or something more intangible like the bond between two letters.

Having a specially designed pair of letters has become an established part of type design. "It's especially useful for using the letters 'f' and 'i' together," Jim observes, "because these letters often clash when typed as single letters."

This is not the only troublesome duo; there are loads of them in fact. Interestingly, the ampersand character started out as a ligature. If you want to look into things further, Jim points you in the right direction: "A full range of ligatures can be found by checking your font character sets."

Ligatures are rarely seen in display fonts, but specially designed pairs of letters are something the type designer has to take into consideration.

26



Type detail

Jeremy Tankard

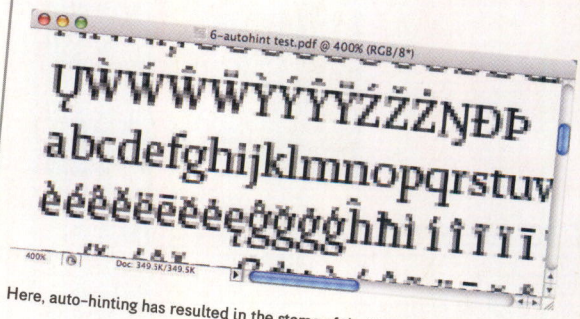
Typographers need to apply their critical eye to every stage of the design process...

> If it's not obvious to you yet then you haven't been doing it right: type design is very much about details. "That old quote from Ludwig Mies van der Rohe 'God is in the details' can be applied to type," observes Jeremy Tankard.

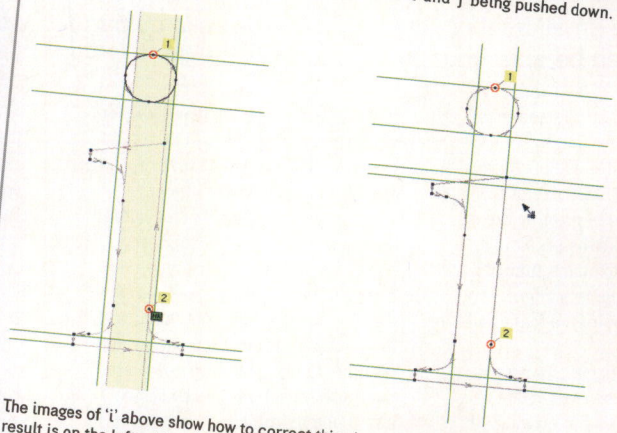
This piece of wisdom can be applied to many levels of the type design process. "Beyond putting the hours in with the design of the forms, as much time should be spent on the careful spacing of the font," explains Jeremy. "The first thing is the overall fit, and next is the kerning between problem characters."

But this may unseat some of your letterforms, so: "At this stage it's usually necessary to go back and adjust the forms to improve the fit." That's not all though: "After the spacing and kerning, attention needs to be given to the screen rendering: hinting."

And if you've come this far, it doesn't make sense to start cutting corners: "It is not enough to just choose auto-hint." That would be lazy and, says Jeremy, "It results in as many visual errors as no hinting does." There are more stages yet, but you get the picture.

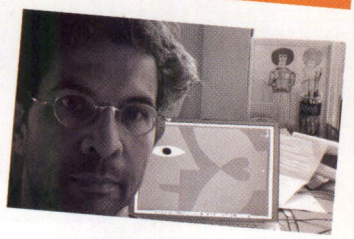


Here, auto-hinting has resulted in the stems of the 'i' and 'j' being pushed down.



The images of 'i' above show how to correct this visual error. The auto-hint result is on the left, with the corrected hinting on the right.

27



Make or break

Max Kisman

Graphic design and typographies are allied in the struggle to "change routine perceptions"

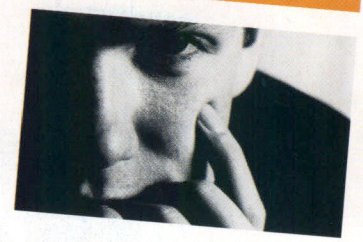
> "I am fascinated by the fact that whatever form a letter takes, it will always be a letter," says Max Kisman, attempting to explain the attraction of type. This relationship between meaning and form is under a certain amount of stress: "It's challenged by the fragile balance between what 'makes' and what 'breaks' a letter form." This is what keeps Max coming back: "I like to play with the contrasts between forms," seeing how their interplay can be used to blur meaning.

Max has also been developing a complex picture of another relationship: type and design. "Letters are forms, shapes," he says for starters. "Not just shapes, they have a useful function too." It turns out: "When you can read them, they reveal messages."

"Graphic design not only carries the information, it has the powerful position and responsibility for opening different ways of looking," explains Max. Its other value is in "changing routine perceptions."

Typography lends design its strength. It's a "strong and valuable partner."

28



What lies beneath

Rian Hughes

Typography embodies the elemental principles which underpin design. It's all in there...

> Rian Hughes is not afraid to make bold statements, but this is more bold than most: "Typography is the particle physics of design." Although it's not immediately obvious what this means, it triggers a recognition that typography has some underlying connection with the essential nature of things. Graphic things.

It's a more literal comment than you might expect it to be as well. When asked to explain what he means, the renowned typographer replies, "It's just that — the fundamental principles of aesthetics and readability are all there in font design." Luckily, though, it doesn't require that we dig huge tunnels under the Swiss Alps otherwise we may have made less progress than we have.

Rian goes on to separate the science from its application: "Like atoms, the use these letters are put to is a different concern." Whether this is possible is academic: "The shapes themselves, minus content, are concerned with the most basic laws of harmony and balance."

Rian believes that font design encompasses the fundamentals of aesthetics and readability.

29

Don't accentuate the positive

Jason Smith

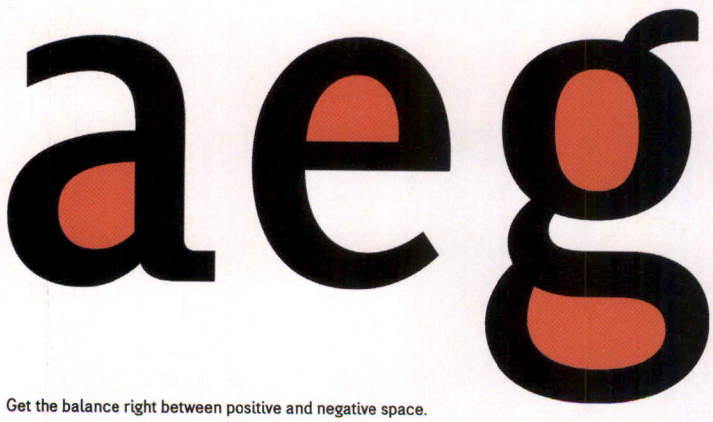
Type design is about balancing the black of the letterform with the white that surrounds it

> "It all has to do with positive and negative spacing." Jason Smith is talking about how to properly judge letterforms. "When you're designing letterforms or fonts, you design both the negative and the positive space," he explains. Each shape has two components, not just the one.

"It's sort of like Yin and Yang," says Jason, "where the white and the black fill up an equal space." The aim is to create a kind of visual harmony between the white and black shapes on the page. "You need to do that with every letter."

"If you imagine the letter O," says Jason by way of a visual aid, "then you put a baring to either side." This encloses the shape, to prevent it from spreading uncontrollably. "You look at all the white space to either side and in the centre of the shape."

You're not working on a production line: "It's not just the one letterform then you move on to the next one." For Jason, creating a typeface should be an organic process: "Once you finish one letter, you don't sign it off and that's finished." The whole should fit together seamlessly.



Get the balance right between positive and negative space.

"It's sort of like Yin and Yang, where the white and black fill up an equal space"
Jason Smith

Inspiration soon turns into hard graft when developing an entire font set.

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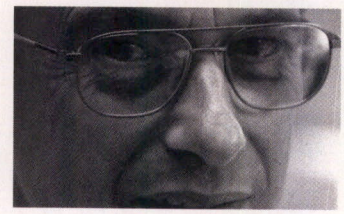


No shortcuts

Robin Nicholas

Type design follows a path of rapid inspiration and drawn-out development, so you have to master both...

> Typography is not the Johnny-come-lately of the design world – it's been around a long time, long enough to develop proper history. The typographer's modus operandi has evolved over that time, and here it is: "Type design is a moment of inspiration followed by weeks of application and re-evaluation!"

Monotype's point man, Robin Nicholas, wants to highlight the ratio between inspiration and hard work: "New design ideas often form around relatively few characters," he says. "This is followed by the development of full alphabets, numerals and punctuation." It's this latter stage which takes time and patience. "This development often requires the re-assessment of the original ideas." It seems nothing is set in stone. "Perhaps proportions or weight relationships prove difficult to apply to all characters," continues Robin. There will always be adjustments which feed back down the development line.

You may even get to the end of the alphabet, but you're not even out of the woods then: "Making new weights such as bold or black may highlight problems that require the original design to be re-visited." The upshot of all this is that: "You have to be prepared for some long hours!"

[w] www.adobe.co.uk

Win Adobe CS 2!

We've got two copies of Adobe *Creative Suite 2* to give away...

When you've finished reading the huge amount of advice from the industry's leading designers this issue, you'll probably want to put your new ideas into action. And what better way than by using *Adobe Creative Suite 2*? Even better, you could get your hands on it for free!

Thanks to Adobe, we have two copies of the industry-standard design suite to give away worth £1,051 each. We probably don't need to tell you what's new in *CS 2*, but in case you've been hiding under a rock, we'll let you in on a few of the new features.

First, there's *Photoshop*. The most widely used app in the industry has gained some impressive new features in its ninth incarnation, including a new Vanishing Point tool for correcting perspective, the ability to select and move, group and transform multiple layers at once, and better support for RAW images.

Illustrator CS 2 is similarly impressive. The biggest addition is a new tracing tool, called Live Trace. This enables you to convert your sketches into vector objects in double-quick time, with an amazing amount of control. In addition, the new Live Paint feature makes it extremely quick and easy to colour your traced drawings.

InDesign CS 2 gains some neat new features as well – the most interesting being the addition of Object Styles. This enables you to save a wide range of graphic, text and frame attributes and quickly apply them to other objects. It's a massive timesaver.

Then there's *GoLive CS 2*, which brings you the tools you need to turn your print content into that destined for the Web and wireless devices. Also, *Acrobat 7 Pro* takes care of all your PDF printing needs. Finally, there's *Adobe Bridge* – making it easy to quickly find and preview *CS2* documents; and *Version Cue* – a great network-based tool for managing large projects.

We don't need to tell you how good this software is. Answer the simple question on the right, and send us a postcard to **Adobe CS 2 Competition, *Computer Arts Projects*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW**. Alternatively, enter at **[w] www.computerarts.co.uk/competitions**

The question

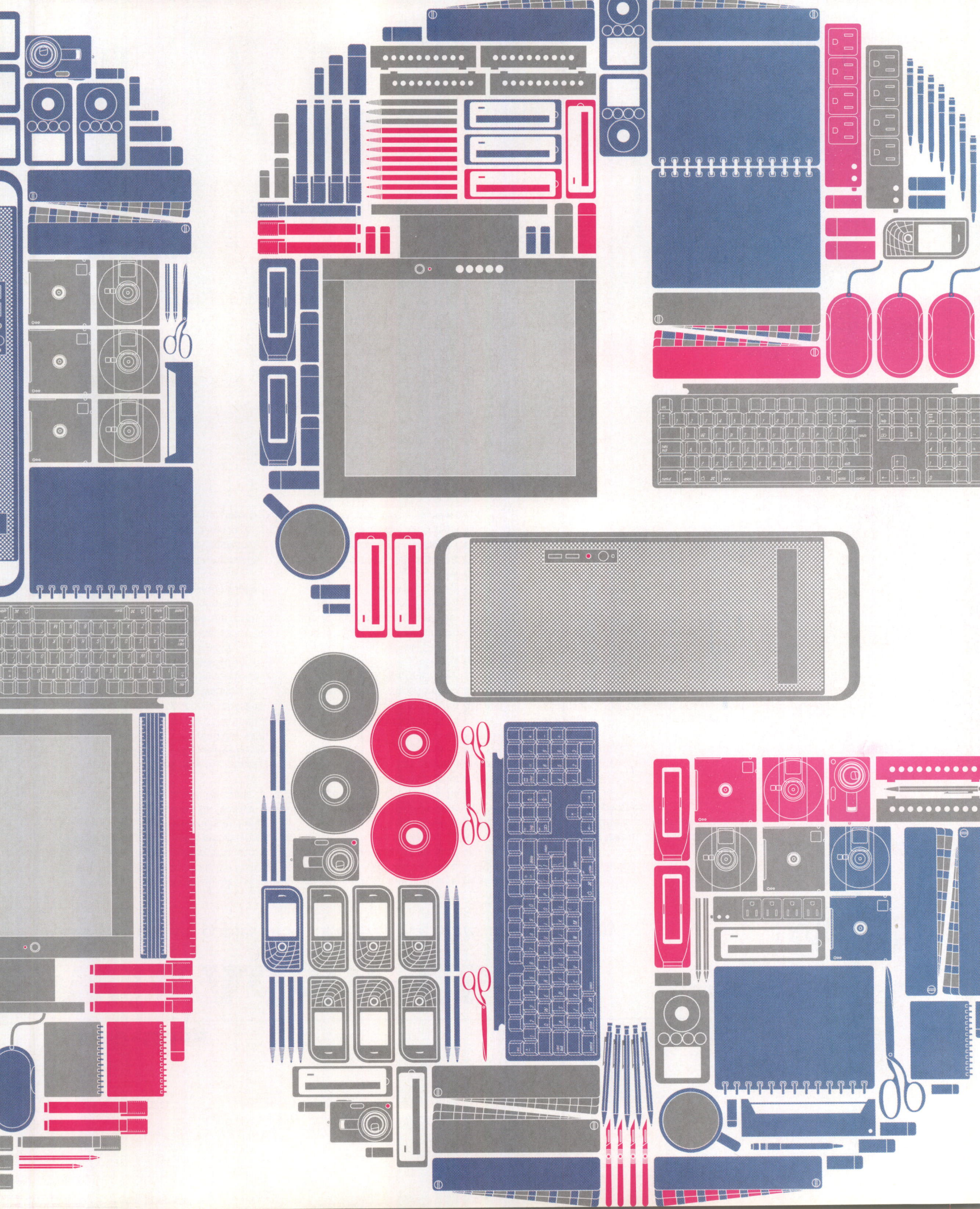
Which new feature of *Photoshop Creative Suite 2* enables you to correct and match perspective?

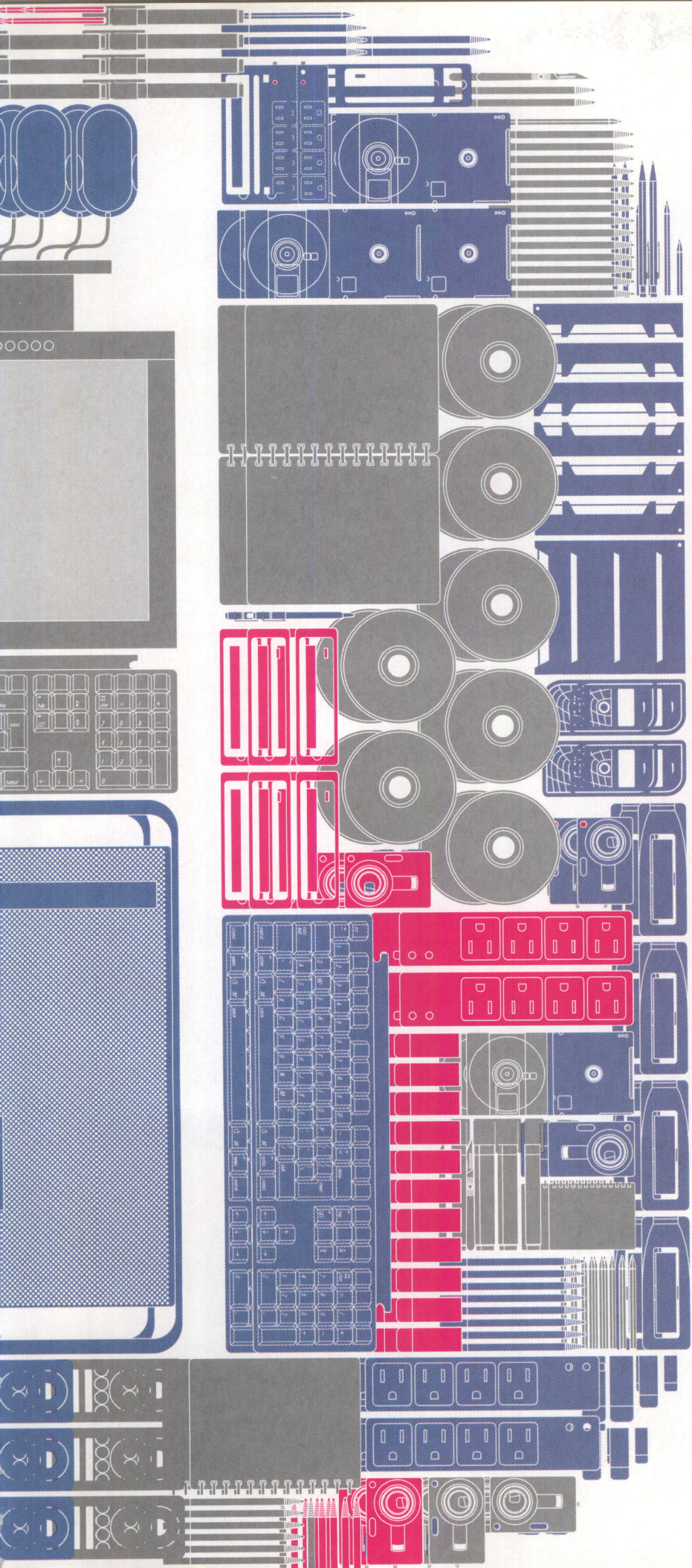
The rules

The closing date for this competition is 25 August 2005. Employees of Adobe and Future Publishing, their agents and families are not permitted to enter. Multiple entries are not accepted.

The Editor's decision is final and there are no cash alternatives. No other correspondence will be entered into. If you are entering by post and do not wish any of the companies involved in this competition to contact you with further offers, please indicate this on your entry. We will not pass your details on to third parties. ca-p

PRIZES WORTH OVER £2,000!





RULES OF GRAPHIC DESIGN

The knowledge you need to make it big...

Over the following pages, some of the world's leading designers share their experiences and thoughts with you – all to give you the chance to take your skills and knowledge further. We've teamed up with such seminal figures as Neil Fletcher of Substance, Jeff Knowles of Research Studios, Martin Fewell, and Justus Oehler of Pentagram to bring you essential design advice.

Neil Fletcher brings you valuable business advice, whereas Jeff Knowles tells you that leaving everything until the last minute can sometimes be a good thing. Martin Fewell goes on to warn that you should never be without your sketchbook, and Justus Oehler of Pentagram recognises the importance of getting the brief straight before any design work is undertaken.

Read on for the wisdom of the world's best graphic designers...

01

Avoid pigeon-holing

Jonathan Kenyon

Refuse to be confined to just one area of the design process, by offering the full works...

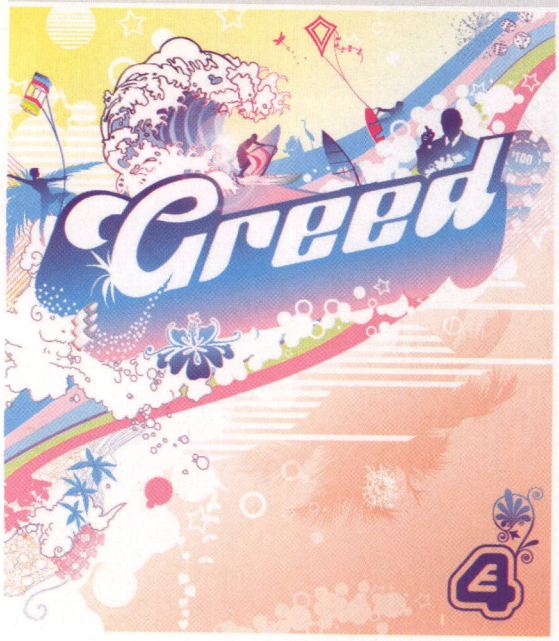
> "In the early days," says Jonathan Kenyon, one half of transatlantic design studio Vault49, "we found we were getting approached almost exclusively for our illustration talent." Of course, this was flattering, but there was a downside: "Our work was being handed to other designers to apply typography or oversee the print process.

"We felt confident in our ability to handle all aspects of a brief," continues Jonathan, "so we suggested that we should be given more control." And, if that strategy didn't pay off, Vault49 used the ultimate sanction: "We offered to take on the additional responsibility free of charge."

Though not free of risk, this approach gave the lads a chance to demonstrate the true breadth of their abilities, an experience which leads Jonathan to observe: "There are a lot of openings for designers who refuse to be pigeon-holed as having just the one talent."

So, get out there and show them what you're capable of. "Apply your talent to everything you'd like to do," says Jonathan. After all, why should you be constrained to just one area of the design process? "Try not to allow others to label you," he continues. "Bring it all together as something unique to yourself that doesn't fit so easily into categories."

Offering a complete graphic design service can land you top clients.



02

Natural resources

Martin Fewell

Be observant, record the world around you and store the materials on your computer so you've got handy resources when deadlines are tight

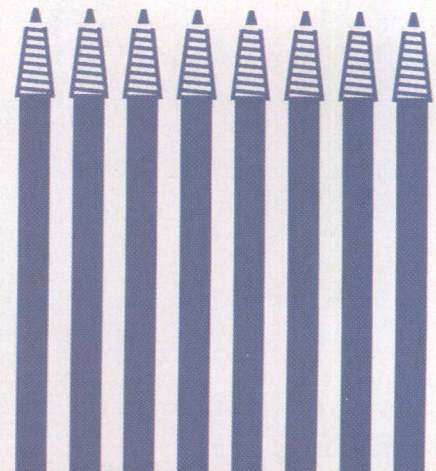
> Let the world help you with your work. There's so much going on around you that it's almost a task not to take notice. This is your raw material so, Martin Fewell says, "Try to have a camera with you all the time as you never know when you'll see something cool or inspiring."

It's not just the camera though: any chance you have to collect potential material could at some point help with a difficult job you're working on. "Keep a sketchbook area on your machine for new ideas, new techniques," adds Martin. Review that selection regularly, because it's incredible how often you will look back and marvel at your own observational skills.

By storing all your collected materials on your computer, Martin says, "You'll have a library of resources that you can use in your work." You'll quickly become confident that you have the necessary basic ingredients knocking around for even the most challenging jobs. "And when you have a job with a very short deadline," says Martin, "they'll be there waiting." It always pays to be prepared.

Sketchbook materials can be useful resources, whether they're photographic or compositional.

"Keep a sketchbook area on your machine for new ideas, new techniques"
Martin Fewell



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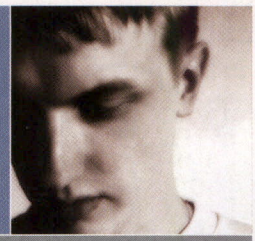


Photoshop photography

Per Gustafson

Focus on your *Photoshop* skills to keep your photography looking sharp

> "Thanks to *Photoshop* I can be a photographer," says Per Gustafson. The Swedish designer sees the Adobe flagship as a useful bridge between the disparate areas a designer must be able to straddle.

"This program helps me to retouch a lot of photos," he points out but, "from retouching to montage in *Photoshop* isn't a big leap." The idea is to just see where things take you. This is a huge package, so don't limit your possibilities when using it.

Make it a rule to run your snaps through *Photoshop* just to see what happens: "When using photos I always put them through *Photoshop*, even if it's just to experiment with layer effects and lights." You never know when you'll stumble on something interesting.

"I've also created some montages with 3D in photos." The possibilities here quickly multiply once you add an extra dimension. "It's something I'm going to continue with, just collecting more ideas and taking new photos every day." Finally, Per adds: "I manage to take pictures that don't need retouching at all."

Take your photography skills to the next level using *Photoshop*.

04

Photoshoot madness

Rob Coke

Studio Output's Rob Coke has a recipe for a successful photoshoot: prepare the right ingredients and hope everyone rises to the occasion

> First things first, says Rob, "If you find yourself in the lofty position of art directing a photographic shoot, do everything within your power to convince the client that getting a decent model costs a lot of money." You can't turn lead into gold no matter how hard you try.

It's probably just as well that you go the whole hog: "Point out that even spending a lot of money is no guarantee that you'll get a good model." This could prove to be a nice insurance policy later on.

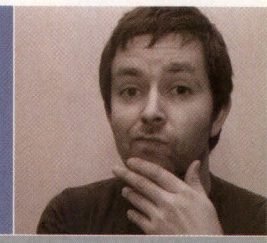
If you want your shoot to have a fighting chance, says Rob, "You and the photographer must prepare everything with military precision." Leave absolutely nothing to chance: "Because anything that can go wrong, will go wrong." Rob cannot emphasise the value of preparation enough: "Start work before sunrise and go at it with guns blazing."

No matter how hard you try though, "You'll always reach a point midway through the afternoon where, with six shots still to nail, your models are projecting all the charisma of a breeze-block and your photographer is a stroppy, screaming, caffeine-crazed dictator."

This is perfectly normal, so don't panic. Instead, Rob advises: "Keep a cool head and make a mental note of where to apportion blame if it all goes tits up." That's all the bases covered.

The secret of a successful photoshoot is to plan everything with military precision.

05



Watch those ad people

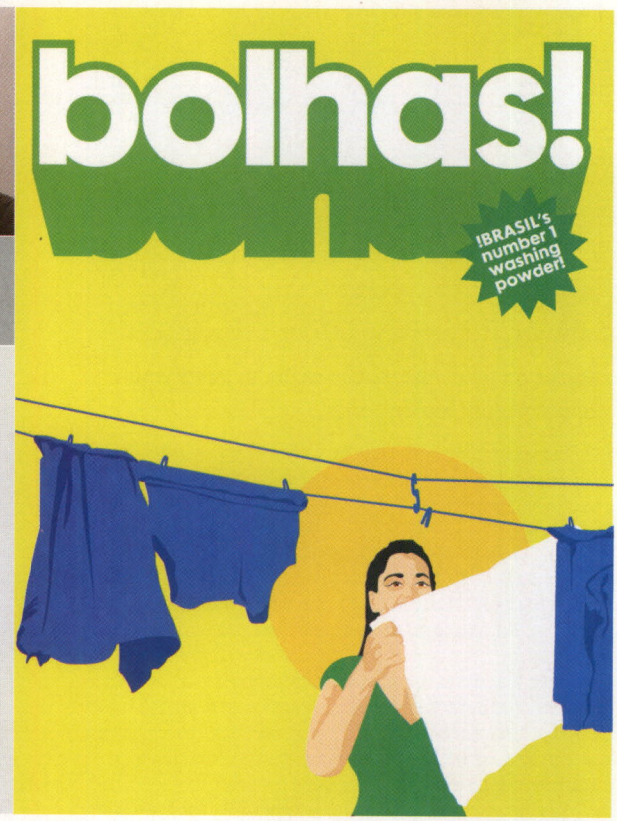
Rob Coke

In the world of advertising, there is always small print to be considered...

> You've had a call from one of those big ad agencies, one with an acronym perhaps, and you can't believe your good luck. Whatever you do, says Studio Output's Rob Coke, "Don't start rubbing your hands together just because a big ad agency offers you good money for a 'quick turnaround' job." There's a catch.

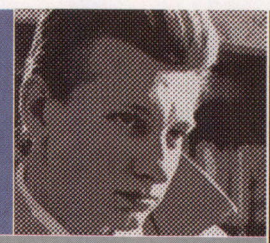
"It's tempting initially to think that there aren't possibly enough hours between the briefing and the deadline for you to earn such a generous fee," relates the now world-wise designer. "But three days of caffeine-fuelled sleep deprivation will make you realise you were wrong to make such an assumption." Rob cautions against underestimating those nice ad people: "They know exactly how much a job is worth to you, and them." There will be terms: "You'll be expected to allocate enough designers to get the job completed within that time." And conditions: "They will want you at their beck and call at all times."

The upshot of all this is that you should never make the mistake of thinking an ad agency has miscalculated. There's no such thing as a free lunch so, "Always make sure you can fulfil any job you take on." If you do, things will be peachy.



Studio Output created this image as part of the campaign for the launch of Brahma beer.

06



Guan Xi

Neil Fletcher

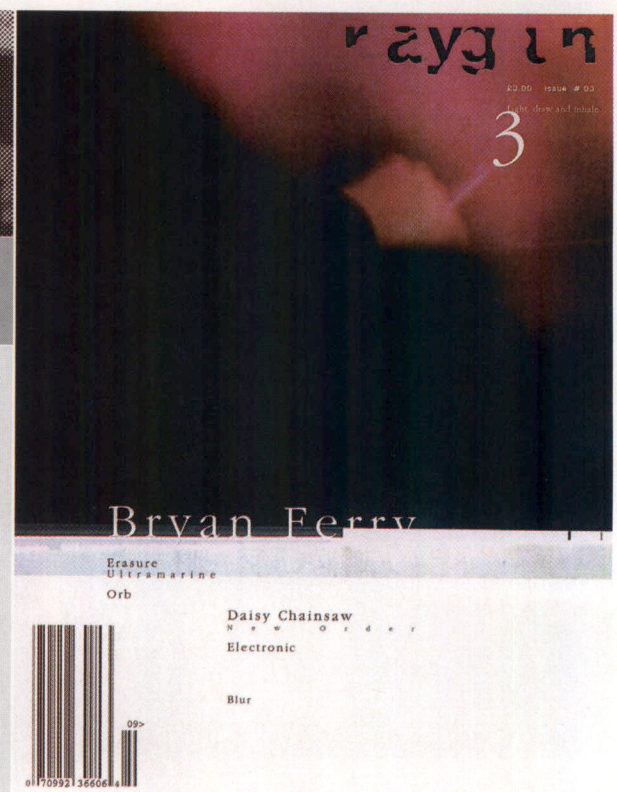
Neil Fletcher of Substance cautions creatives against playing fast and loose with the bottom line...

> "Don't work for free unless it's of indirect benefit." That's the long and short of it according to Neil Fletcher, founder member of Sheffield design outfit Substance. In the absence of money, "It's all about Guan Xi."

No, Guan Xi is not a missing member of the Jedi council but a Chinese phrase used to define an intangible but essential business concept. "It's like under-the-table trading which can be witnessed but not seen," says Neil. "It is difficult to define."

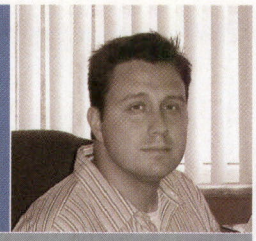
Here's a more confessional version: "It's back-scratching if you will." One good turn deserves another it seems, and this article is a prime example. "We hope that by contributing we'll benefit somewhere down the line," suggests Neil. Well, you never know your luck.

"Building one's network is critical if you hope to nurture allies," concludes Neil, so don't dismiss freebies out of hand, just make sure the old Guan Xi is being taken care of.



Neil's cover artwork for *Raygun*. Contributing to magazine articles is a good way of networking.

07



Typography
Neil Summerour

Neil Summerour stresses that designers must learn to apply the rules of typography...

> First, Neil Summerour lays his cards on the table: "Being a type designer means I'm already going to be sensitive about this." He draws a painful analogy: "Like a parent is about their 'ugly kid' who is beautiful inside."

The message is simple: "Adhere to good typographic judgment when you're designing your pieces." But still it needs restating: "Distressed, energetic or disassociated headlines and 'pushing the limits of legibility design' have their place." There are few disciplines more reliant on constant invention and experimentation, "But a client or an employer wants to know you can actually work with this glyphic art form."

Before you object, "That doesn't mean 'make it boring', but 'make it clear, make it crisp, make it well designed'." Got that? "No orphans, no full justification that makes your type look like a pock-marked heroin addict." And here's one you can take away with you: "Learn what a diacritic is — ha!" He's in full swing now. "If you just said 'what?', go look it up. Learn the proper usage of the dash, en dash and em dash, and use it."

Typography isn't easy: "The brilliant designer paints with type, knowing how much and how little to push it — when to take a chance and when to let off."

Apply the rules of type design many times before you break them.

"The brilliant designer paints with type"
Neil Summerour

08

Keep it on the record
Ed Templeton

To avoid problems when working with friends, make sure your understanding is contractually clear...

> "I'd rather be embarrassed up front than come to the trouble I have in the past," says Red Design's Ed. He's not referring to any kind of rash, but the problems which can occur when you work with friends and assume you understand them perfectly in a professional environment.

It's typical, says Ed, "If you're working with friends, those are always the jobs that go wrong." Harsh words are exchanged: "The ones you have money arguments over." And the fallout will always be that much more painful, all because, according to Ed, "You've both assumed you understand each other really well and you don't actually do things as officially as you would otherwise."

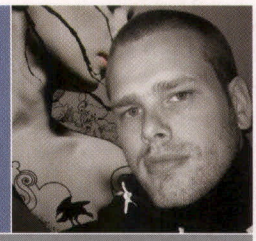
Don't get caught out. "Treat a friend in the most suspicious way ever," says Ed. It sounds odd, but get everything down in writing: "You're going to the extra level of admin to say that 'you agree and I agree'." Ed's right: it's worth being embarrassed to protect the friendship but also the actual job itself.

This isn't a warning against working with friends though: "You should work with friends because that's a fun side of work," agrees Ed. "But you must go the extra mile. Don't assume you've agreed things."

Ed Templeton says that it's more important than ever to set up a proper agreement when working with friends.

"Treat a friend in the most suspicious way ever"
Ed Templeton

09



Don't be precious

Jonathan Kenyon

Collaboration is much more fun if you accept the strengths of others...

> Collaboration is the life-blood of the creative world, but to get the most out of it demands more than a little selflessness. As Jonathan Kenyon notes, "The goal has to be the production of the best work possible." Anything else will only lead to trouble.

If someone else happens to make the decisive contribution to a joint project, it shouldn't make you mumble into your beard about 'going to the dogs' or 'sleeping with the fishes'; that would be poor form indeed.

Vault49 points us in the right direction: "We don't mind if we've created everything ourselves or whether we like something because of the input of another designer." That's the spirit! "We're just happy to be a part of something that we enjoy."

Jonathan goes on to point out that just being involved with a successful project is good business, whether it was your baby or not. And there's plenty of scope for hidden benefits too: "Often, working with other creative people brings out the best in us." It can even rekindle the flames of enthusiasm and, says Jonathan, "breathe life back into our work when we are starting to become tired."

Vault49 is prepared to share the love.

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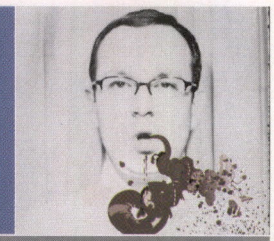


Design isn't (that) important

Mike Cina

Mike Cina of WeWorkForThem and YouWorkForThem puts things in perspective...

> That's right, you heard the man: "There are far greater things in life than design." It's easy to get lost in the necessarily absorbing world which design – and all the creative industries – create for themselves.

"I used to wake up and design, go to sleep while designing still," says Mike. He's not alone. Late nights, strong coffee and deadlines, with those three you can pretty quickly loose track of the outside world.

"Without a doubt, you should be the best in anything you do," concedes Mike, "but you should have limits on what you'll do to achieve success." Ain't nothing worth causing genuine heartache for. "There are far more important things in life." And if you have a healthy perspective, your work will reflect that: people will see that in what you do.

So if you find yourself wondering, once again, how you're going to fit it all in, stop and take a look around you. "Friends, family, a belief in something, the world around you... all you have to do is look," says Mike. Don't be so hard on yourself: "There's a balance to a healthy life."

"Have limits on what you'll do to achieve success"
Mike Cina

Don't spend too much time working: "There's a balance to a healthy life."

11

PDF pathos

Neil Summerour

PDF is not a toy. Learn to use it responsibly and it will recommend your skill and professionalism

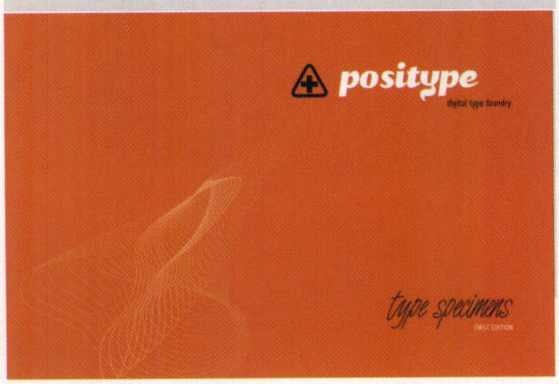
> "Adobe," says Neil 'Positype' Summerour. "Gotta love them, gotta hate them." The reason for such schizoid sentiment is this: "They have presented us a format that allows the imbecilic to communicate with professional." You guessed it: "It's the PDF."

According to Neil, PDF's versatility is also its undoing: it is both poison and cure. "It's an excellent way to send work, résumés, proofs and contracts," he points out. "But understanding the ins and outs, file size and resolution, distilling and dpi is a must." In the wrong hands, Neil believes the strengths of the universal communication device can become dangerous.

So apply yourself: "Endeavour to really utilise this as a tool." The designer's exhortation is worth heeding.

"Don't use it as just a quick means to an end created in *Photoshop*." This is something which separates the wheat from the chaff: "Learn how to make a PDF that works for the circumstance and you'll always be seen as the pro."

Supplying the right PDF for the job is a sign of professionalism.



"Don't use it as a quick means to an end created in *Photoshop*"
Neil Summerour

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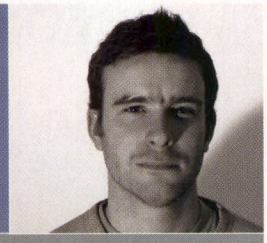


Client choices

Jeff Knowles

When putting work before clients, always go for quality over quantity...

> Deciding what to put before a client is always a tricky business; an art, some might say. Jeff Knowles has a classic for just this situation: "Never include work you're not 100 per cent happy with." You're only tempting fate if you do otherwise.

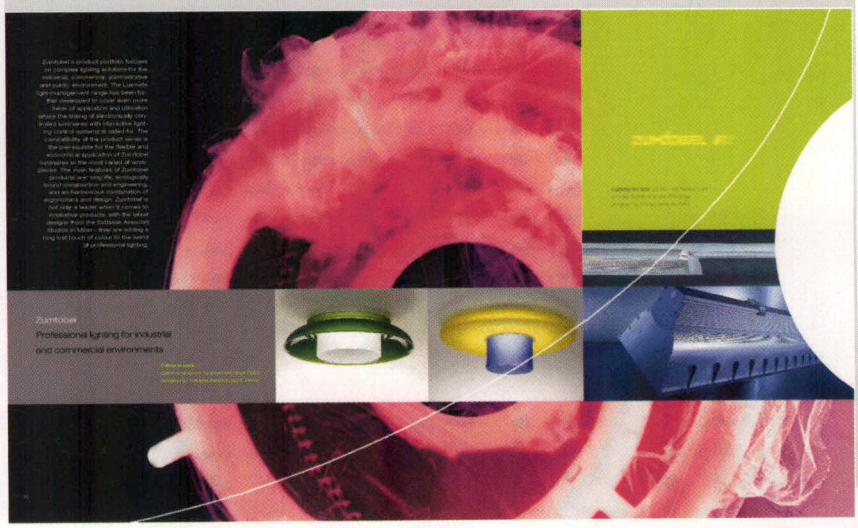
"It's a trap you can fall into all the time," says Jeff regretfully. "You have three really strong design concepts, but you decide to bulk it out with some of the other concepts you've developed." The idea is just to show the client how hard at work you've been, sweating over nuances, exploring blind alleys.

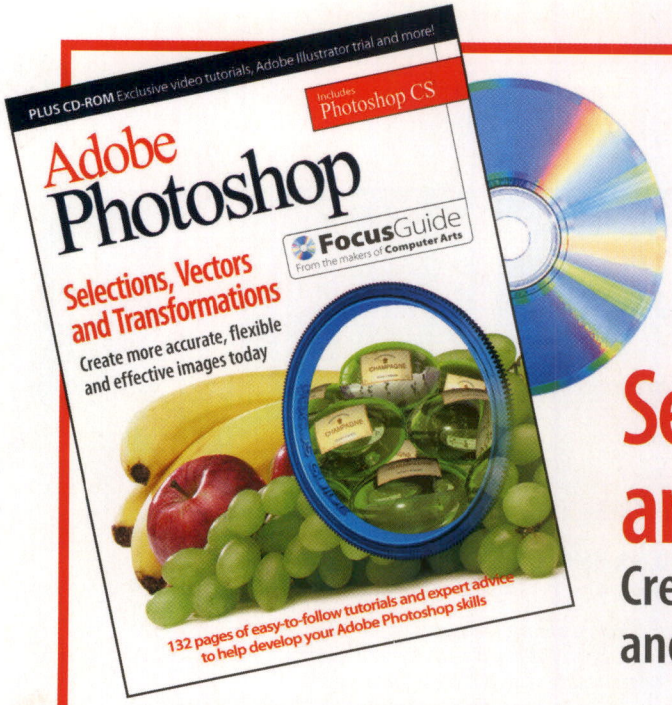
The problem is: "It's almost guaranteed that the client will come back having chosen the weakest, ugliest option from the bunch." And that will hurt. "It will leave you bewildered and ultimately gutted that the best piece of work you've done in a long time has been dismissed."

For anyone used to dealing with a fickle-minded clientele, this scenario is all too easy to imagine, so do yourself a favour and take Jeff's advice.

"It's a trap you fall into all the time"
Jeff Knowles

When presenting more than one concept, be sure you're happy with them all.

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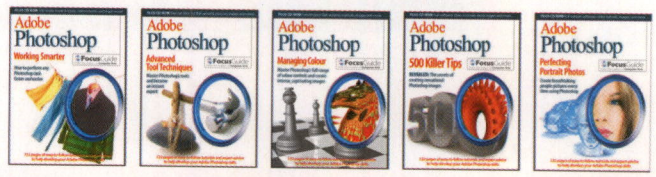

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Cash money
Martin Fewell

There are two sides to work: finance and fulfilment. You need both to be truly successful

> Martin Fewell has an important question for you: "Wanna be a rich designer? Unfortunately, cool exciting work doesn't pay too well." If your ambition stretches to a designer crib and wheels to match, he suggests, "Work for a bank producing their reports."

If you still fancy exercising your creative muscle, there's more bad news: "The endless hours you have to put in sometimes, you may even wonder if it's worth it." Of course, you know where this is leading: "It's the creative flex on the interesting jobs that provide the payment, and make you work all night long."

Giving free rein to your creativity is essential if you want to avoid becoming like a bear in an Eastern European zoo. "With that though, you've still gotta pay the bills and do the less interesting work," says Martin, tempering our enthusiasm slightly.

It's a case of finding an equilibrium: "Get the balance of creative and general design right and you'll be sorted."

Find an even balance between paid projects and creatively fulfilling work.

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Don't get too comfortable
Tom Skipp

A cautionary tale of over-familiarity with clients, from Tom Skipp...

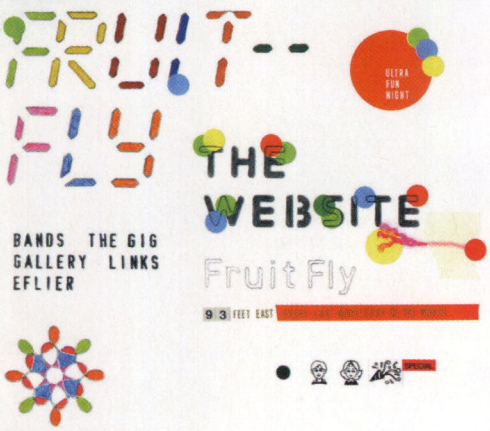
> "Working with music clients I used to go to meet them at gigs," says *GQ Style's* new designer. "Not any more." This sounds ominous — buckle up.

"I began drinking well before the band I was working with were scheduled to play." Well, that's natural. "I met the record company bosses and was relatively polite." Okay so far. "I carried on drinking during their set and stood nodding appropriately." Not a foot wrong up till now.

"They came off," says Tom. "I approached the entourage brimming with where they could get better and how I liked track three but the rest were mediocre." In vino veritas and all that. "Then I proceeded to tell them how they're nothing without my artwork — I was only assisting in the design."

"I helped carry their instruments back to the Colombia hotel and bored them to tears with my confidence and cockyness." Then things took a turn for the worse! "The night ended badly as I seem to remember giving the 'V' sign to the whole band and management while getting hauled away by the concierge."

Tom didn't meet the client again. The moral is: "Don't treat clients as friends until they become friends."



Club promotional material by Tom Skipp for Fruit Fly. We doubt you'll find the designer drinking with his clients at the club.

"I proceeded to tell them how they're nothing without my artwork"
Tom Skipp

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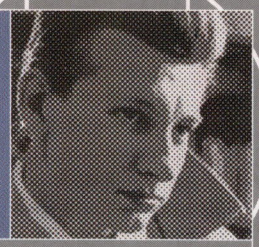

Keep it simple

Neil Fletcher

Making a decision about your relationship with the world of commerce should be a priority

> "Financial stability or creative freedom — you can't have both," says Substance's Neil Fletcher. It's no use sitting on the fence: you'll have to make a choice at some point and, that being the case, Neil suggests you get things straight in your head from the outset.

"It's probably wisest to decide at the start what you want from your career," he says. If you waste time trying to please all of the people all of the time, you're not improving your odds of achieving either.

"Building up a challenging body of work takes time, dedication and sacrifice," says Neil. And if you ask his opinion, that's the right thing to do, devil take the consequences. But commercial considerations don't have to be negatives, do they?

"The irony," says the Sheffield-based designer, "is that when you're young, time is not so precious" and, of course, you fully believe yourself to be invincible, "so most struggle on, hoping to make a difference." And maybe they do.

If you do want to maintain your creative integrity rather than sell out to the Man, Neil's advice is simple: "Please yourself first and your client's audience second."

Building up a challenging body of work takes dedication and sacrifice.

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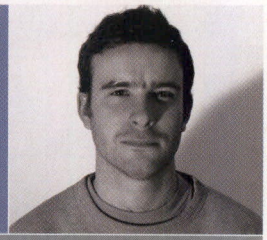

Lastminute dot design

Jeff Knowles

By leaving stuff until the last minute you can draw on your instincts to produce some very interesting results...

> There's plenty to be said for forward planning, but it's not the only way to produce great design. "Don't be scared of leaving things to the last minute," advises Jeff Knowles, Senior Designer at Research Studios London.

"Some of your best work will be done when you have the least amount of time," says Jeff, who feels a sporting analogy would best illustrate the point.

"It's a classic with footballers. How many times have you heard a commentator say 'the striker had too much time' just after he's dragged a golden chance wide of the post?"

Sportsmen and women everywhere are probably nodding sagely at this.

For those without an athletic pedigree, Jeff asks himself the obvious question: "Why has the striker done this?" The answer is simple: "Because he had time to think about it rather than using instinct."

The same can be said for design: "In some cases, using instinct rather than careful thought can produce some very surprising results." By the way, he doesn't mean running around hugging your colleagues or exchanging shirts with your clients...

"Using instinct rather than careful thought can produce some very surprising results," says Jeff Knowles.

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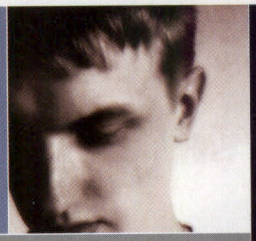

Conveying a 'feel'

Per Gustafson

Every piece of work has a feel as well as a message – you must learn how to convey it

> Along with all the technical detail and a certain amount of information, design is required to convey a certain feel. "This is something I always build my art or graphics upon," says Per Gustafson of Modernstyle.

This should always be the case: "If we make something, there's a feeling we want to show," explains Per. You need to figure out exactly how this is going to work.

"I guess the struggle is how to get that same feeling out to everyone, even though we know it's going to be viewed in so many different ways," adds Per with a nod to [deconstructionist philosopher] Jacques Derrida. "Still, it is possible to deliver it in the exact way you want. There's ways to control it."

To this end, Per has a pair of suggestions. First, consultation: "Honest feedback from a colleague can be worth so much." And second: "You need to let a project rest and then look at it later on, maybe with a new perspective."

Think about how you can get your message across from the very beginning of a job, and let the project rest so you can get a new perspective on it

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Design ≠ Clients

Mike Cina

Design has all manner of purposes and definitions, but primarily it's about communication, not clients

> At first sight, Mike Cina's equation looks all wrong, but then he starts to explain it: "Design isn't for selling, it is for communicating." When you look at it like that, not only is the pressure to sell lifted from your shoulders but the options immediately begin to open up.

"Design has been thought of as many things throughout time," says Mike. "It's hard to believe, but people have used design for many things besides selling products you don't need." It also has a future, one that is already becoming overly commercialised along with the rest of our lives.

In another life, design was thought capable of changing society for the better. "That's a foolish thought," says Mike, "but it could help." And why not, design at its best inspires powerful reactions. So why not give it a go? "You could touch someone."

It doesn't have to change the whole world. "Use your design talents to create something: a chair, stationery, a door knob... anything," suggests Mike. In this way you'll start to drift towards your own centre of gravity. "You could be your own company with some blood, sweat and tears."

"Design isn't for selling, it's for communicating," says WeWorkForThem's head honcho, Mike Cina.

"Get ready to move on with your work before other designers move on ahead of you"
Jonathan Kenyon

19

Seize your chances
Tom Skipp

Making the most of opportunities is more than just jumping in with both feet...

> Tom Skipp's advice could be applied to any walk of life, but for a designer it's worth its weight in gold. "While you'll spend much of your early days becoming familiar with the systems of business," says Tom, "occasionally the door will be thrown open to you." Just the right type of action is required in this type of situation.

"This is an obvious piece of advice," concedes Tom. "The effort and concentration you afford to the smallest of tasks or creative jobs will be quickly repayed with increased trust and responsibility."

Diligence is a virtue: "In subsequent projects you'll eventually be running things." That's where patience and application will pay off. Don't push yourself though: "Over-confidence can quickly be undone by experience, and youthful enthusiasm might be read as rudeness by a greying superior!" Balance is essential.

A recent photo by Tom Skipp, who's never one to miss an opportunity.

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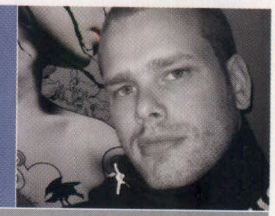

Don't let the grass grow under your feet
Jonathan Kenyon

You should always be ready to move on to fresh concepts, because nobody likes stale graphic design

> Vault49's Jonathan Kenyon believes standing still is falling behind. It's even worse if you don't have laurels to rest on but still insist on resting. "Get ready to move on with your work before other designers and clients move on ahead of you," says Jonathan.

"Anything to keep yourself fresh and looking forwards," he continues. If that means coming up with your own briefs when the clients are thin on the ground, so be it: "We hope that we're always among the first to get bored with our own work." In this way the design team keeps itself from becoming stale.

Clients can't be relied on to supply the inspiration: "You can't sit back and hope for a client to commission you to produce something new and exciting." Things just don't work that way. You have to develop a portfolio that shows what direction you want to go and hope clients will follow.

And if you aren't getting the kind of work you want, commission yourself: "We created many self-initiated pieces," says Jonathan. "Then we made sure everybody saw them." You have to show that you're a prime mover; if you do, clients will want to be involved.

Top: A poster for Isle of MTV club nights for Pointblank. At Vault49, nothing stands still for long.

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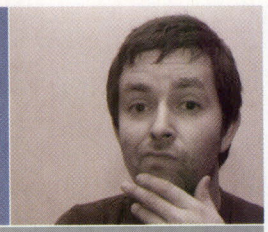


Musical truth

Rob Coke

Designing for the music business is not a 'get rich quick' proposition...

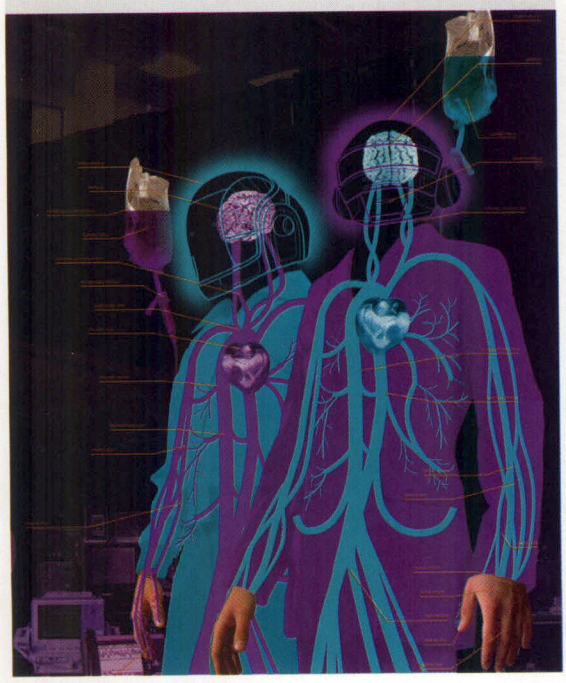
> If Studio Output's Rob Coke is right, it's more of a 'stay poor' proposition. "If you're expecting to make your fortune out of designing for the music industry," says the Nottingham-based designer, "then you could be in for a bit of a shock."

Rob has noticed that there seems to be an art imitating life situation going on, with the music industry "becoming polarised into the haves and have-nots." Design commissioners are cautious: "They're resorting to tried-and-tested formulae rather than taking risks on innovative design."

That isn't to say that working with musicians doesn't have its upside – it can be incredibly rewarding. "But it can also be painfully frustrating." Rob outlines what is probably a familiar story: "For every creative person who appreciates that they are paying for your expertise, there are two who know they could be doing it better than you if only they had as many fonts."

Rob wants to make sure this type of attitude doesn't spread: "Even if you're helping out someone with a small budget, it's important that you put a value on your time." And the idea of speculative work on the promise is a no-no. "Finally," adds Rob, "if you don't know the person you're working for, get paid up front." Oh yes, and if you do know them: "Get paid up front!"

Illustration for *DJ Magazine* to promote Daft Punk's *Human After All.*



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Filter culture

Ed Templeton

Don't rely on *Photoshop* filters to deliver the creativity – filters should only be used as a means to an end

> This point is related to one of our top ten golden rules. "It's something that students tend to do a lot," says a regretful Ed Templeton. "It's the whole filter culture." It can very easily be overdone.

Ed is not a filter snob though. "I use them myself," he admits, "but I have a rule that you shouldn't be able to tell which filter has been used on a job." This is common sense really: "The filter is only a means to an end." The approved method of workflow is: "Work out what you want to do then, if you have to, use a filter to get there."

There is no denying that filters offer a tempting shortcut, particularly when they're new, but, Ed warns, "It will always look rubbish in six months' time if the filter was the creative thing." The end should dictate the means not vice versa.

The general message, says Ed, is, "Proceed with caution on the filter front." This is particularly true if you're showing work. "If someone comes back to me with some ideas and I can tell it's this new filter then we won't use it," says Ed. Save yourself the embarrassment: "Don't let your guard down and start doing lazy things."

Filters weren't used in Ed's Cristian Vogel album cover illustration, but if they were, you wouldn't be able to tell.

Cristian Vogel 1968. Holes

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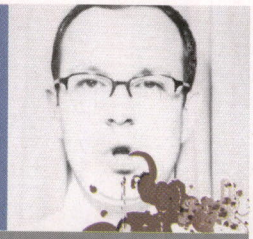


Love to be uncomfortable

Mike Cina

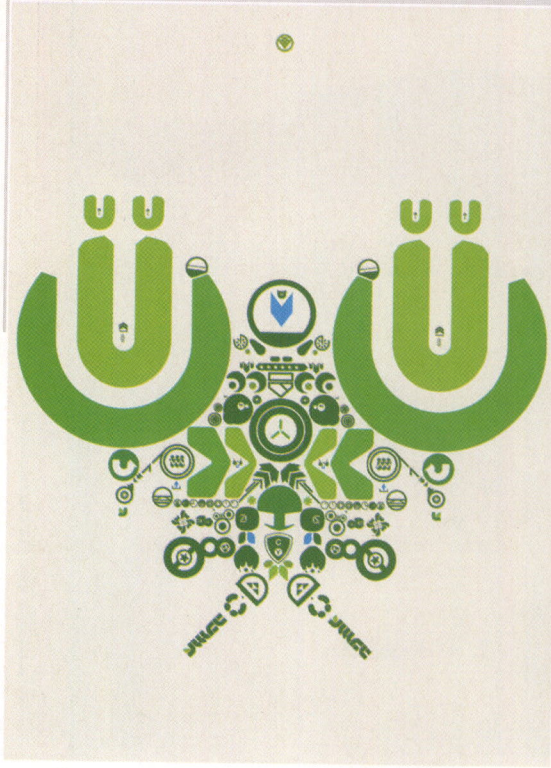
If you want to keep your 'edge', you have to be willing to give up your little comforts

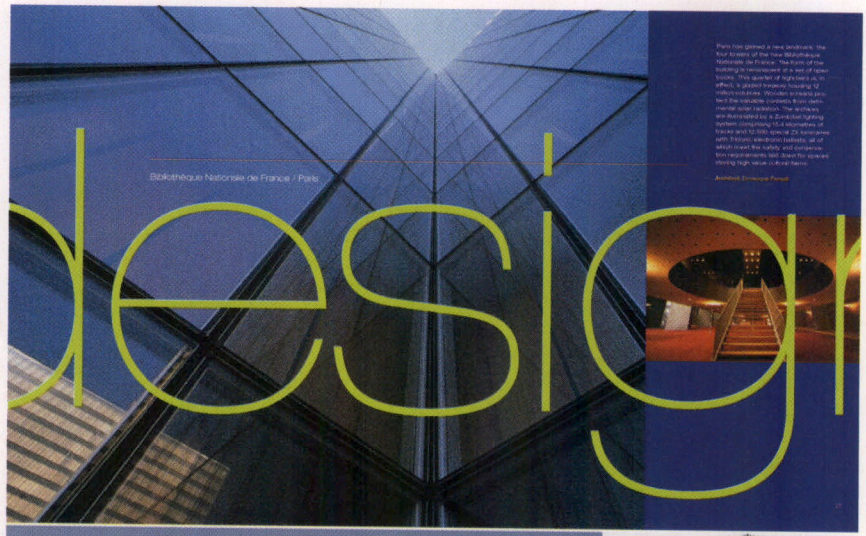
> The ultimate trap is to find yourself cornered by your own success. Letting yourself get used to the day-to-day without really becoming involved in what you're doing. It's a powerful trap because it's comfortable. Enjoyable even. But, as Mike Cina points out, "There's no better way to become lazy than by not constantly putting yourself in uncomfortable positions. When you find yourself becoming lazy, challenge yourself."

A rolling stone gathers no moss. It's a cliché, but it fits Mike's philosophy perfectly: he wants you to be that rolling stone: "Stop using whatever it is that is making you lazy," he advises. "Maybe it's software, a trick, a colour palette... it could be anything." Just say no.

Your challenge then is to conquer the things you avoid, to face your fear. "Use colours that you hate, try doing a project off the computer," he suggests. Just give your creativity a challenge and you'll be surprised how it bounces back. "Try doing things you have never done before."

Get out of the comfort zone and the results will be worth it...





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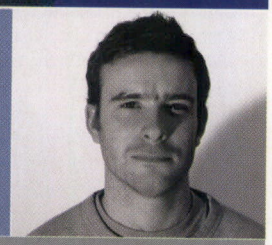

Don't count those chickens

Jeff Knowles

Don't celebrate too early, or you may find yourself in a sticky situation...

> The message here is simple, but hard to appreciate when you're in the trenches, and in the thick of the action. "The project isn't in the bag until the printed piece of work lands on your desk and the pay cheque has appeared on your bank balance," says Jeff Knowles.

Not even the likes of Research Studios can count on work before the allotted time, says Jeff. The reasons for this are just too numerous to consider, so it's best to play it safe. "It's almost never down to your own fault," says Jeff. You'd think this would be reassuring but no: "It's the most frustrating thing because you're just powerless to rectify the problem."

A common scenario makes the hairs on the back of your neck stand up: "Clients will go through a long process of design development only to use it as an exercise to decide that they are happy with what they already have."

It's like window shopping with attitude, but there's plenty of ways in which the job can slip away. The client may not be brave enough to take on a new design, or a new marketing exec could decide to sweep your work away with his brand new broom. "We've even had a client disappear off the face of the earth," says Jeff. "Nobody heard from him ever again." Never assume anything.

Never assume the job is finished until you've got the cheque.

"The project isn't in the bag until the printed work lands on your desk and the cheque has appeared on your bank balance"
Jeff Knowles

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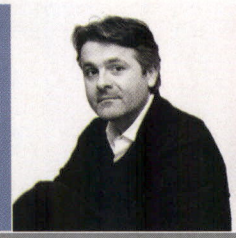


What is the frame?

Justus Oehler

Don't run unnecessary risks by rushing straight to the design stage. Make sure you nail down the exact perimeters of your brief at the outset

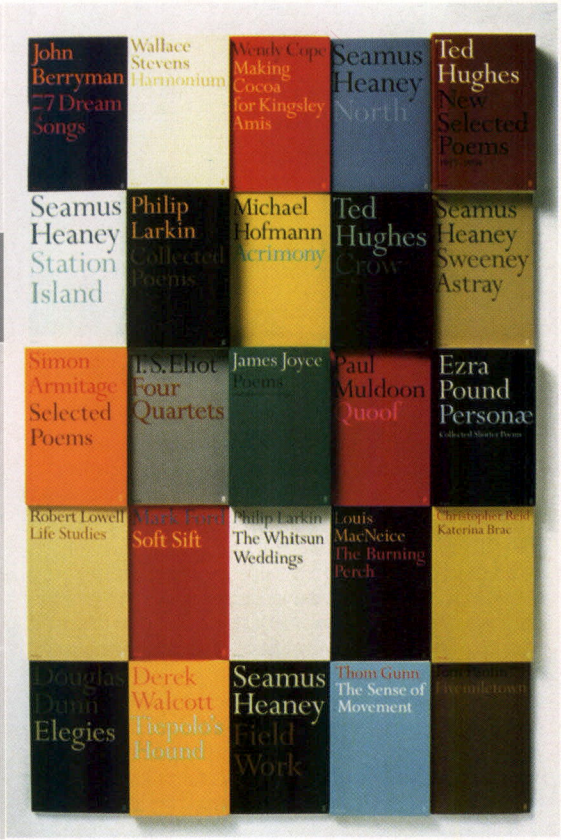
> "When I start a design project, I use the first phase to establish what I call the frame." 'The frame' that's being referred to is what Justus Oehler, head of Pentagram, Berlin, calls a properly drawn-up brief.

"The objective is to eliminate as many interpretations and ideas as possible... to narrow down the options so that the design process itself does not become a guessing game. We want a lean and focused event: an intelligent, professional exercise.

"The frame is made up of the information provided by the client and my assumptions about the right way to attempt a solution of the problem." It's the direction, in other words, in which you point the arrow. "I would take into account, for example, who the target audience is, what I feel is appropriate in terms of colours, typeface, overall design style and tone of voice." And last but not least: "My personal and intuitive view of the problem."

Justus continues: "Once I have put this in writing, I present it to the client and, once approved, I ask the client to sign it off." This gives both parties a contract, and avoids any subsequent misunderstanding. A change will then be a change, not 'what we actually meant'.

Pentagram's Justus Oehler advises you to make sure you nail the brief before starting any design work.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Douglas Dunn Elegies
Derek Walcott Tiepolo's Hound
Seamus Heaney Field Work
Thom Gunn The Sense of Movement

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Order! Order!

Martin Fewell

Organisation is not anathema to the creative spirit. It frees up your time to be creative, so it pays to keep things squared away nicely...

> The image of the snaggle-toothed artist, all hair and paintbrushes, is an attractive one for some, but don't let that kind of style invade your computer. "Keep your files organised," warns Martin Fewell, or pay the penalties.

Even if you don't manage to keep things tidy during a busy job, Martin advises: "Make sure you go back in afterwards, while it's still fresh in your mind." And choose sensible names: "Organise files into folders like Artwork, Images, Initial Designs." It's not all that glamorous, but keeping things nice and tidy on the old hard disk will save you from a lot of unnecessary stress along the way.

It gives you a chance to survey your work and keep a good record of what you've done. "And at the same time you can chuck out junk files that fill up your hard drive," says Martin. In that way you won't have any rubbish to sort through when you're looking for that special version of that project, called 'untitled_1'.

And if you're feeling super-good, "Back the project up to DVD or your server and get it off your computer." You know it makes sense, so overcome your admin fears and get on with it.

Keep your work organised and it'll save you a lot of unnecessary stress along the way...

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Grid system

Ed Templeton

The masters developed the grid system. It works, so make sure you use it

> There is a propensity among designers to see the use of any kind of guide or rule as an unwarranted restriction on their creative freedom. However, experience shows that this view is largely mistaken. "Use a grid system on all layouts," advises Ed Templeton.

"It's no accident that work done by masters of the grid system looks as modern today as when it was done 40–50 years ago." The likes of Josef Müller Brockman, Max Bill and Wim Crowell developed this system for breaking down the space on a page into useful sections to make it easier for designers to convey feeling, pace and structure in their work.

It's the fact that these things work which makes them so appealing. "Even if you use the grid system as a framework from which to break out of," says Ed, "it pays to use it." The forces of order are not always allied against the seemingly random world of the creative impulse.

Work to a grid for ordered layouts, and break out of it for added effect.

"Work done by masters of the grid system looks as modern today as when it was done 40-50 years ago"
Ed Templeton

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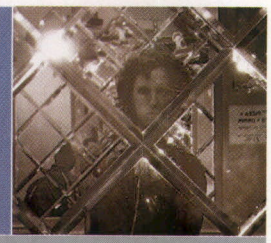


Take criticism positively

Tom Skipp

Like most medicine, it's hard to swallow but it's good for you. There's always something that can be learned from criticism...

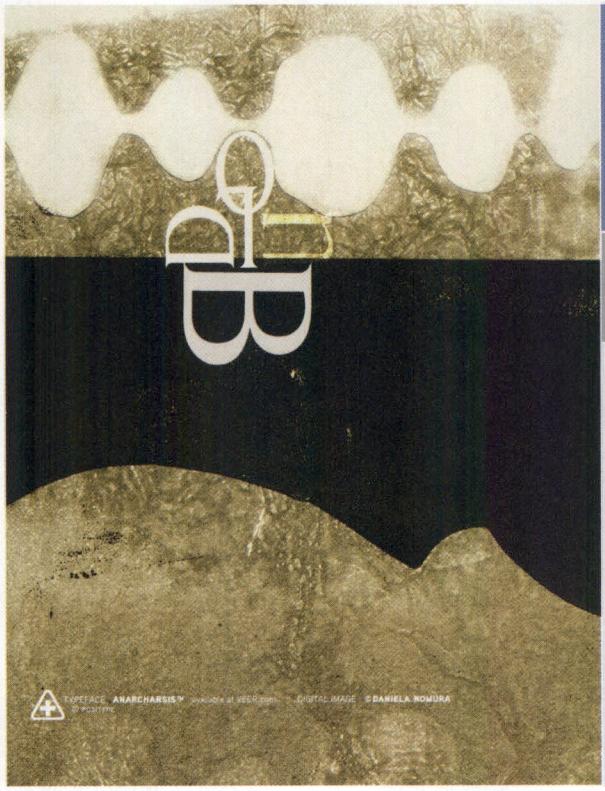
> Nobody naturally enjoys criticism, but as a professional you have to be able to appreciate the views of those paying for the work. Tom Skipp reminds us that often: "Your work will not be what people expect, require or like."

This is especially true where clients are involved: "People viewing your work have a different set of criteria to you." You might see the culmination of Western civilisation, but others may be looking at their annual report. "Any form of criticism is good for you, but not always good," says Tom. Get used to it, quickly.

"I'm involved in a client-led industry where external opinion is imperative to keep check on my self-expression," says Tom. Though it sounds slightly counter-intuitive, Tom's right. Design isn't just your work even if you're the only designer. You are, in effect, collaborating with the client.

"Although you should never lose sight of your ideals," says Tom, "the majority of design is aimed at your mum." So: "Ask your mum for advice." Then: "Ignore it!"

A recent photograph by Tom Skipp. Remember: "People viewing your work have a different set of criteria to you."



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Plug-in sanity

Neil Summerour

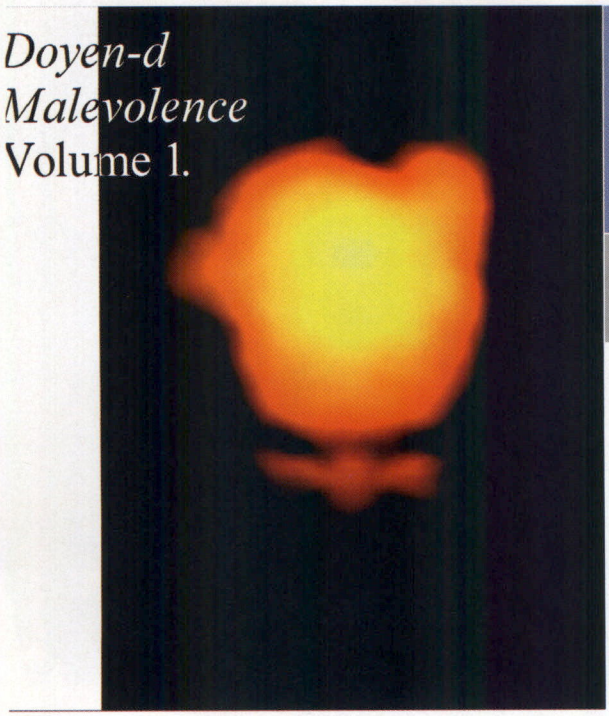
It's not big and it's not clever, so use that plug-in sparingly

> "I see this a lot," says Neil Summerour with a shake of the head. The field of graphic design has its own pitfalls and blind alleys and this is one: "A good-hearted, virtuous designer, swayed by the trappings of the Dark Side." It could happen to anyone — even you could be "pulled into a never-ending cycle of plug-in abuse."

Once you're in, its like quick-sand. "There is no 12-step program to help the addicts," says Neil, adopting an anguished tone. They have become "twisted supplicants of digital perversions." If this sounds a little extreme, just hold on, because there's good reason to fear the unhinged plug-in abuser. They know not what they do.

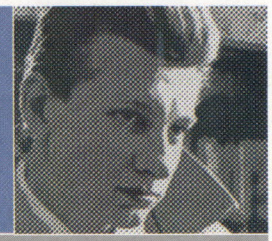
"Just because you can apply a drop shadow, inner bevel, colour overlay and slap a texture and lens flare on a layer in *Photoshop* doesn't mean you need to." Neil sounds a little exasperated. You can't blame him really, because there's just no need for it. If you can't help yourself, here's what you do: "Go find a sponsor, take up knitting, keep a journal — just stop this madness."

Neil Summerour suggests that anyone addicted to plug-ins should take up knitting instead.



The price of total creative freedom can be costly. Don't expect to make a fortune if you have rigid principles.

30



What price freedom?

Neil Fletcher

If you want total creative independence, you have to be prepared for the possible financial consequences...

> When Neil Fletcher mentions, "Substance usually runs at a loss," he does so with mixed emotions. While it's a source of regret, in a way it's also a matter of pride for the studio's founder. "It's not wise," he admits, "but it's a side-effect of being independent."

That independence means Substance can be busy "experimenting fanatically with our own visual language." This way of working is creatively fulfilling perhaps but unlikely to please the bank manager. Fortunately, Substance has principles.

Neil believes: "It's rare for industry to promote or encourage independent graphic design, typography or alternative image making." This is a crisis: "Our industry is awash with staleness." Can anything be done? He goes on to mention 'graphic drones' and their propensity for "replicating images of Substance." Though this makes them images with only borrowed substance, it still hits a nerve.

"Almost everyone knows of a 'graphic designer' these days," adds an increasingly irate-sounding Neil Fletcher. "But so few professional 'designers' equalise type effectively — let alone think beyond the norm." Substance wants a world where idea, concept and creativity get the commitment they deserve.

ROCK ON!
»30
RULES OF
ILLUSTRATION
VECTOR
JEDI

Become a successful illustrator with the advice from our panel of industry experts...

To be a successful illustrator you're not only going to need the ability to manipulate software, you're going to have to have a distinctive style, and a business brain. In the following 30 tips, world-renowned illustrators share their secrets of success with you.

Autumn Whitehurst, for instance, suggests that once an image is signed off by the client, don't be afraid to develop it some more for your own portfolio. Mauro Gatti tells you of the importance of experimenting with your work as you go along in order to find a unique style, whereas John McFaul emphasises the fact that there is nothing more important than self-promotion.

So take this opportunity to learn from the best illustrators out there as we bring you 30 essential rules of illustration...

01

Plague of plagiarism

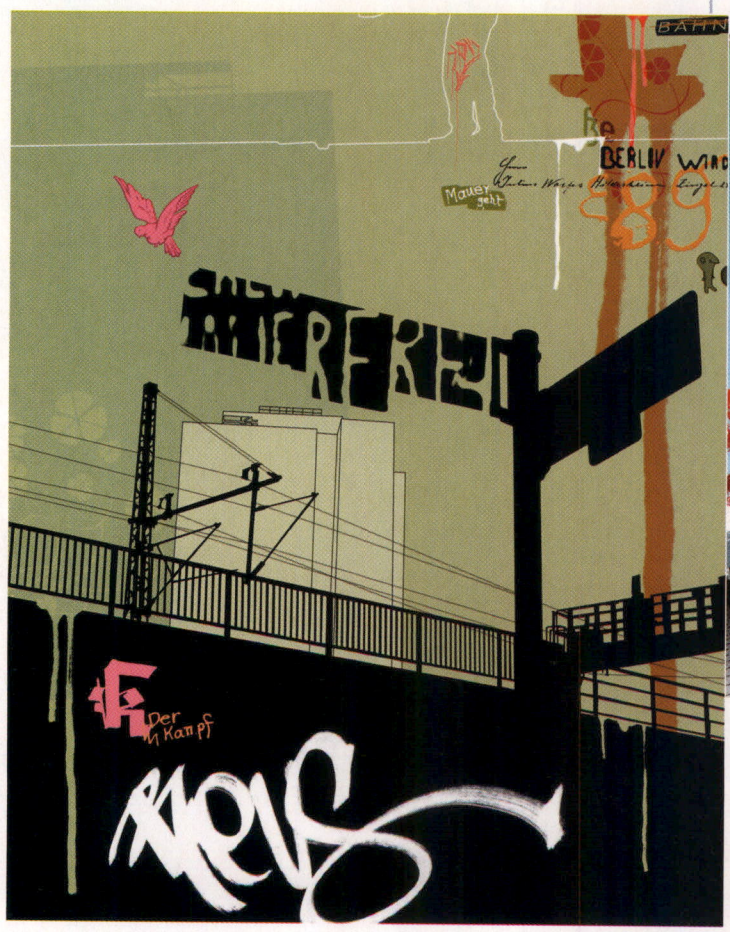
David Foldvari

Copycat artwork is obvious, especially to the illustrators who designed the originals, so don't do it!

> David Foldvari's work is hard to copy, because it demands not just the ability to draw but to somehow convey the dirt and emotion of the world. "It does happen to me sometimes though," says David. This is clearly not a laughing matter.

"I see it happening to other illustrators, especially those who work purely using digital media." The whole thing puzzles David: "What's the point? You're just making your stuff look like an inferior version of something that already exists." This is a plea for originality, but David is happy to point out that the message has teeth of its own: "If that's how you wanna get work then get ready to be small-time."

For those whose work consists of "tracing stuff with vectors and rearranging it using pretty colours" then adding "graphic elements", David has some straightforward advice to share with you: "At least try and do something vaguely interesting and original with it. Very lame. I just don't get it." If you don't, we'll let him loose on ya.



David warns that if you copy more successful designers' artwork, you'll only ever be small-time.

02

Format for flexibility

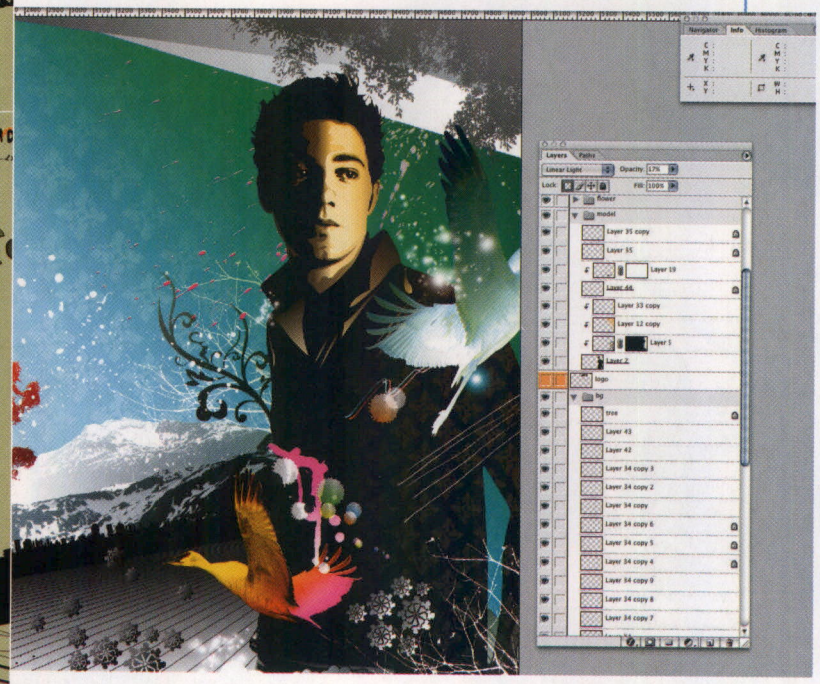
Roddy Llewellyn

Supply .psd files or raw files, because a happy designer will always come back for more...

> Editorial work is the illustrator's bread and butter, so it makes sense to keep editors and art people as sweet as possible. Supplying artwork that can be 'tweaked' may go against the grain slightly but it's the best way to grease the wheels.

Being flexible is a prerequisite says *Computer Arts'* Roddy Llewellyn: "I always ask my illustrators to provide their work as a layered *Photoshop* or *Illustrator* file." This keeps the options open as late as possible: "It gives me control over the work so that if elements interfere with a layout, they can be removed.

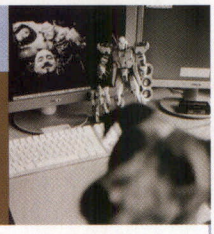
"A lot of our cover illustrations have figures in them," continues Roddy, and these must mix with other elements to produce the best cover possible. "So if files are supplied as layers, we have more creative freedom." Without this, cover design becomes impossible: "To put figures or elements over mastheads, boxes and type we'd have to cut out figures by hand." That process will be good for nobody, so Roddy advises: "Always work in layers."



Keep art editors sweet by providing them with editable *Photoshop* or *Illustrator* files.

"If elements interfere with a layout, they can be removed" Roddy Llewellyn

03



Get the structure right

Benedict Campbell

Avoid the nightmare scenario of last minute re-edits by applying the lessons of the film industry: get non-linear

> "People tend to start from the beginning and just put all the detail in as they go." This, says Benedict Campbell, is a mistake: "If you do that, it quickly gets difficult for you to change things."

A veteran of the advertising world, Benedict has developed an understanding of the production process and a set of strategies that help him cope with its often fickle ways. The problem is that clients think anything digital just involves a press of a button so, says Benedict, "They think it's okay to change things at the last minute."

How does he cope with this? "The main working strategy these days is to build in 'safeties'." This essentially means getting smart with *Photoshop's* folder system, giving yourself plenty of easy edit points. "It's the clever way of working," Benedict insists. "If you don't do it, you really are mad!"

There's no way of getting around it – this situation is not going away. "If an art director is selling the talents of a digital artist saying 'he can do anything', you can't say 'I can't do it'." The truth of the matter is, "You can, but it's just an awful lot of work." Your job is to minimise that effort.

Build editing points into your projects in case the client wants to change things at the last minute.

04

Working for the agency

123klan

Getting your feet under the table at a good agency will give you the experience to succeed on your own...

> Everyone needs to start somewhere, and working for an agency gives you a valuable grounding in the basics of good business practice. "You learn respect for the deadline and how to discover exactly what a client wants." These are your basic skills, reveals Scien of the 123klan.

"I was an Art Director at Team Chman for five years," explains the French designer and graffiti artist. "I learnt a lot about relationships with clients, how to respect a deadline and how to put together original ways of communicating a particular product or idea." In other words, how to think on your feet.

Even though a client may have given you a fairly closed brief, that doesn't stop you from being creative. "You can always propose new ideas or insights," says Scien. Don't be afraid of trying things out. If you jump right in with your own business, the danger is that you will always have one eye on the bottom line.

This kind of apprenticeship enables you to make mistakes on other people's time, to learn the ropes so you don't hang yourself at a later date. "After a few years, I quit this agency to create the 123klan with my wife Klor," says Scien. The klan, and its related graffiti posse, continues to prosper.

Gain more confidence in your abilities by learning the ropes at a good agency.

"You learn respect for the deadline and what a client wants" Scien

05

Managing complexity

Derek Lea

Keeping a proper balance in your work means ensuring no element overpowers the composition

> "A lot of my work is fairly complicated," says Derek Lea, "containing a lot of textures and visual elements." This could easily get out of hand so: "A rule of thumb that I impose on myself is that things can become complicated within an illustration but only in terms of either colour or elements, not both."

An illustration never seems quite right – it needs a bit of this or a bit of that. The temptation is always there to just keep on adding stuff, but this isn't always going to work.

"It's important for me to ensure that things don't become too busy or chaotic," says Derek. So he uses this simple rule of thumb to tell him when things are going off-track: "If I am combining a lot of small elements into an image, I keep the colour palette quite limited." This avoids confusing the viewer's eye as it scans the objects.

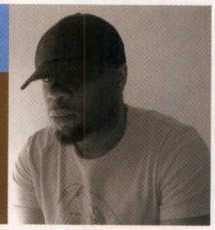
By the same token, "If there's a lot of different colours within an image, then I keep the image components to a minimum." Again, it's all a question of balance.

It's a fine balance between using the right amount of colours and components in an illustration.

06

Knowing the score

Henry Obasi



Don't get stars in your eyes. The music business is just that: a business. And not a great money-making one at that

> Although the music business provides graphic design with a significant portion of its interesting work, there are limits to the levels of co-operation that can be expected from an illustrator. In short, says Henry Obasi, "Never do any work for musicians for free, silly cheap, or on a royalty basis."

The royalty scam – that is, they will pay you once they start selling records – is a particular favourite of Mr Obasi, who comments: "That shit just don't work." A not unreasonable comment on what could quickly become a hiding to nothing.

Of course, this reaction may cause some bad feeling, but there's an easy way to clear things up: "If they don't understand your reasons why, then get them to exchange one of their best tracks (copyright included) for some design/illo work."

The feedback you receive from this suggestion should do the trick and the artists concerned will be better able to empathise with the next illustrator they encounter. It's almost a public service.

Henry Obasi created this illustration of Bill Gates for *King Magazine USA*. The illustrator warns not to fall for the royalty scam when working for the music industry.

07

Temptation of grandeur

Simon Yuen

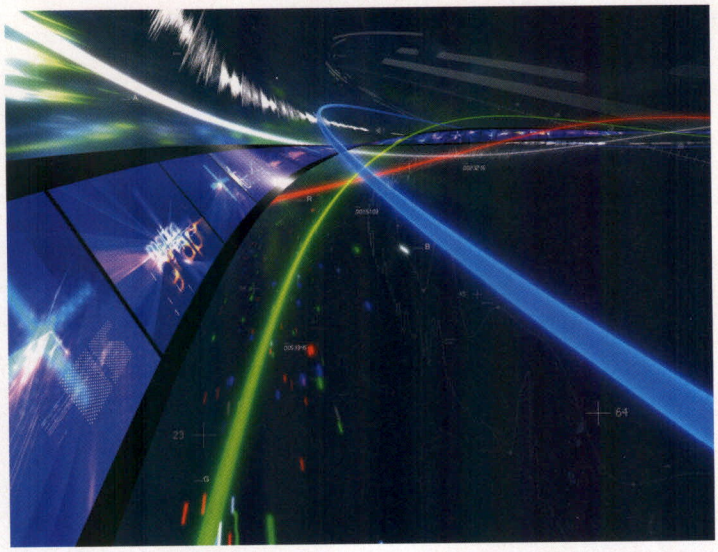
Don't get carried away with grand schemes, because sometimes the simple approach works best...

> Simon Yuen of GR/DD suggests that some people are scared of the word concept: "Because they feel that every project has to have this huge conceptual, lateral idea behind it." They believe that every client and every job calls for the reinvention of the wheel or its modern equivalent. But, he assures us, "That's not true."

Of course, sometimes a grand scheme is just what's called for, but at other times the right approach could be: "Just a simple way of approaching things." It comes down to being able to sniff out when a big idea is needed, and when it's not.

"We do a lot of work for Sony PlayStation, designing press kits for them," he explains. "Because of the audience it's going to, there's no way you can have a massive idea behind it." They just want a simple and tangible item; frills would over-complicate matters. In this case, the concept becomes: "Just a good reason for doing what you're doing."

Naturally, this process also has a lot to do with deadlines. "If you just have two days to come up with something, it's less likely to be something amazing than if you had a couple of weeks," says Simon.

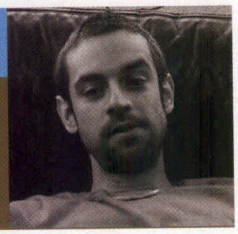


This illustration by GR/DD was commissioned for a recent issue of *Computer Arts Projects*. The illustrator has to judge what's appropriate based on the information they receive.

08

Drawing on your style

David Foldvari



David Foldvari underlines the importance of drawing in establishing an individual style...

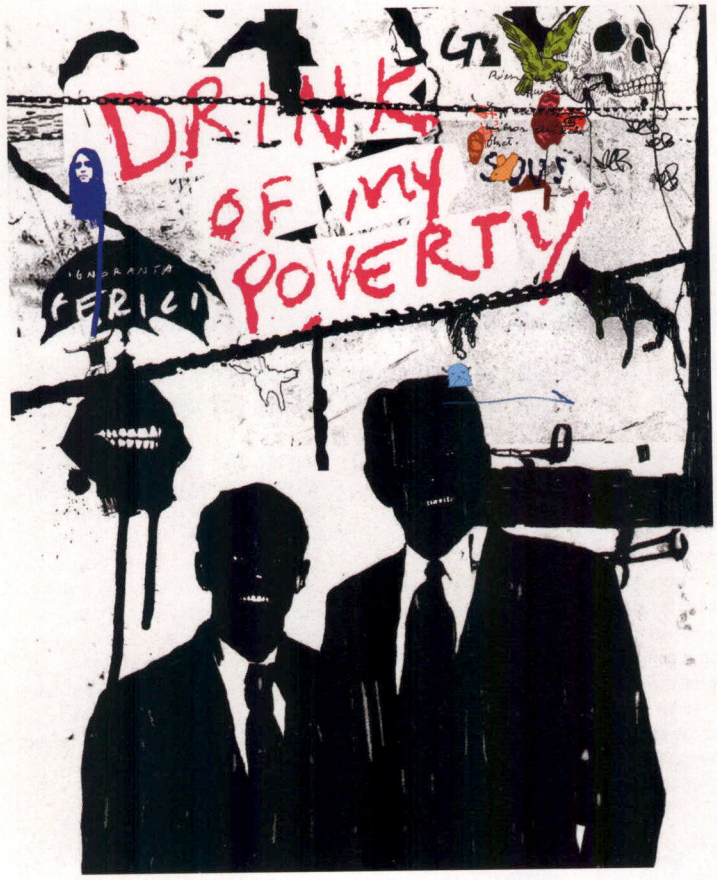
> David starts off with what sounds like a reminiscence: "I had a tutor when I was at university called Chris Sharrock." But then he goes and spoils it: "We didn't get on too well at college." That's a shame. "In fact, he very nearly managed to throw me out.

"Back then I didn't really know what he was talking about," confesses David, "but now that I think about it, he had some very wise things to say about 'style'." That sounds interesting, go on. "He hated the word 'style' and said it wasn't something you were born with as an illustrator." Oh dear.

"Style just means a way of working that is individual to you," explains David. "If you're an artist, this will come from the way you draw. Therefore, observational drawing is more important to an illustrator than anything else."

There's an important conclusion waiting for us here: "Stylistically, if you're shit at drawing, you will always have to rely on gimmicks, or methods you copy from other illustrators." That is a bad thing.

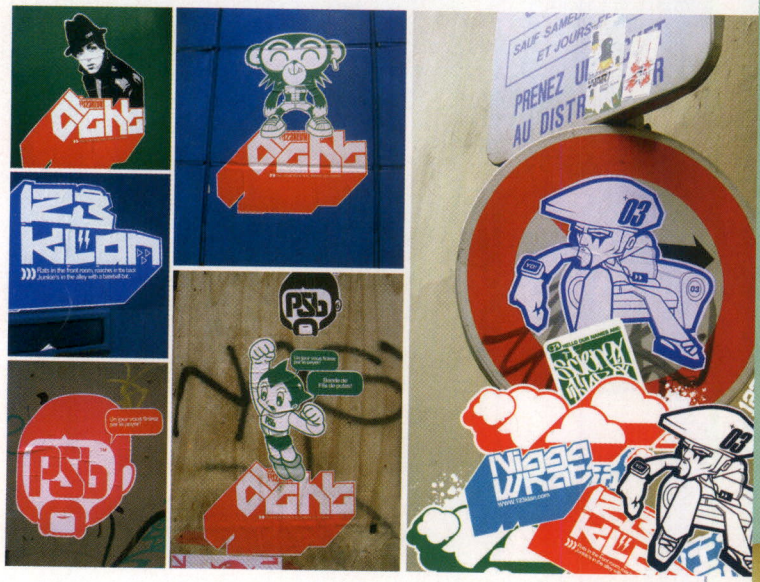
"I'm not preaching," says David, "but I get a lot of people asking me how I work, and how I 'got my style'. I really have no answer for them apart from that I just drew from observation a lot and went from there."



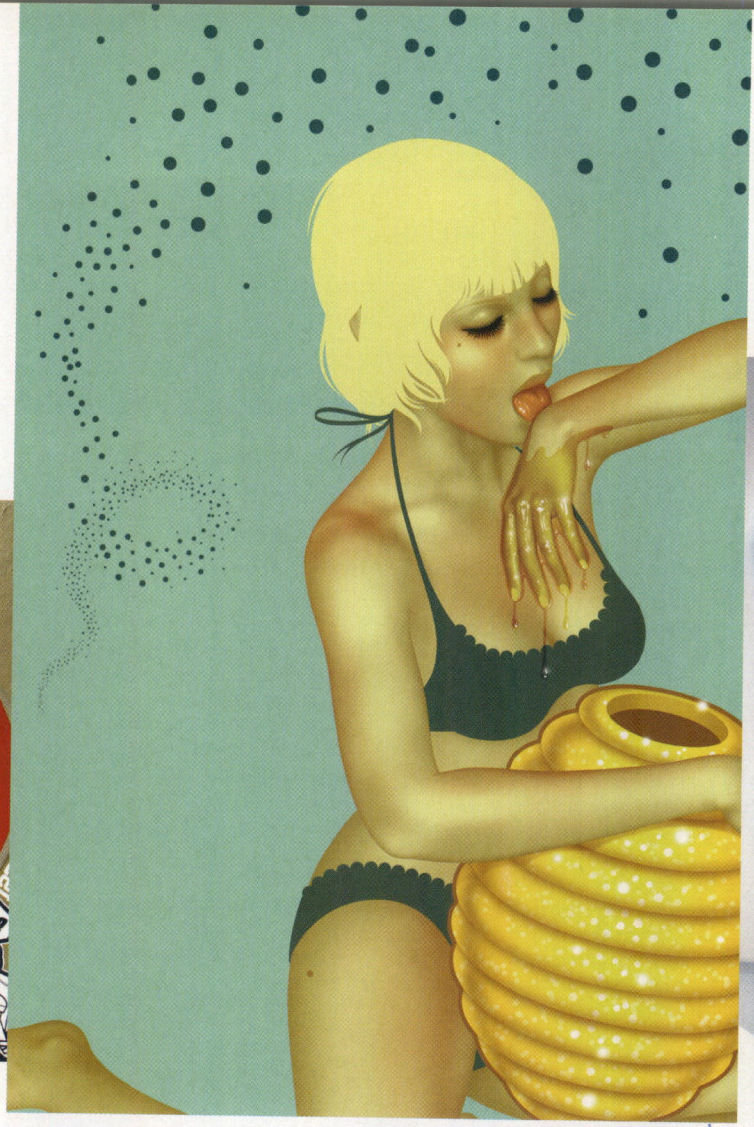
"If you're shit at drawing, you will always have to rely on gimmicks, or methods you copy from other illustrators," says a straight-talking David Foldvari.

33cl
SE BOIT TRÈS FRAIS

"You don't have to come from the streets to be good" 123 Klan

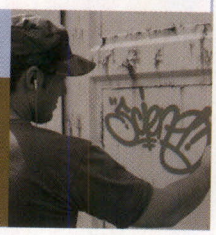


With cheaper spraycans and legal places to paint, graffiti art has broken out of the hood.



Autumn Whitehurst works in some warm yellows to evoke the "heavy wet heat" of this image.

09 Back in the dayz
123klan



The hood is no longer the only place you can learn those skillz. It's the quality that counts not the rap sheet!

> "The streets are where we come from." That's how Scien describes the origins of his design studio, 123klan. "It's where we learned everything and won the respect of others trying to be the best or the most famous." This sounds cool, but, "It's just a game."

The reason why? "Today you don't have to do it any more coz everything evolved." Perhaps this makes it a bit clearer: "You can buy good spraycans cheaper and paint in a legal place... it's all cool. You don't really have to come from the streets to be good."

This message is filtering through, says Scien: "We used to paint illegally because we had no places to paint." And, even more controversially, "We had to rak some cans coz we got no money to buy those expensive krylons."

But although today graffiti is a business, some still revere the wrong side of the tracks: "Kids think they need to vandalise the city to be true to the game, but who cares? If you're talented, you don't need to do a million tags." Scien concludes there's only one way to get on: "Work hard!"

10 Sweet but Sugar Free
Autumn Whitehurst

When working to a theme, use colour to express mood and feeling in your composition

> Autumn Whitehurst has a way with colour, an understanding. So when the Art Department set its stable of illustrators the challenge of producing work around the theme 'Sweet but Sugar Free', she immediately began to work the chromatic angle.

"I had decided that I wanted to play up the idea of something sticky and seductive," explains Autumn, but the opening gambit was unsatisfactory: "My initial attempts at finding the right colour palette resulted in something much more airy and clean."

There just wasn't enough heat: "Lots of clear blues, luminous yellows and milky flesh tones." Sounds lovely but it just wasn't working. "I wanted to make it look as though the sun was weighing everything down with heavy wet heat," says Autumn.

Browns, oranges and reds could have been a solution, but, as Autumn explains, "I preferred to work a bit of yellow into all of the colours, thus making them warmer." This meant the blues and greens could stay, "to play off of the colour of the honey."

MR Scien MRS

Big isn't necessarily better: 50MB is ample for a working file size.

If you want your work to stay ahead of the game, keep up with technological developments.

11

Shrinking file sizes

Benedict Campbell

Don't work at unnecessarily high resolution – let the job dictate the requirements...

> "You don't need to work in as high a resolution as you think you do," reveals Benedict Campbell. "It took me years to work that one out." Though computers are able to deal with increasingly huge file sizes, there's always a tendency to max things out whenever you can. That isn't always the best plan.

"There's a generic size which works well." Ben gives the example of his Canon EOS 1DS MKII: "It shoots a 50 meg file. That's a pretty good working size." The reason is simple: "Much beyond that isn't really that noticeable, even on a DPS." There's no sense in doing work nobody will ever notice.

Ben elaborates: "Let's say a DPS comes in at 70 meg. You can work at 50 meg then flatten and size it up to 70 meg. Nobody will ever spot it." There is one thing that will kill this approach: "Never sharpen anything until you've got it at the size it's going to be repro-ed."

This argument is even more relevant where 3D work is involved. "Renders are much crisper than photographs," Benedict explains. Consequently, if you're working with a photo that's 80 meg in size, you don't need to render an 80 meg frame: "It would need to be degenerated to sit well, so you're probably talking more like 30 meg."

12

Mauro's law

Mauro Gatti

Technology is galloping ahead on the back of improved hardware speeds. Don't get left behind

> Life moves pretty fast; software moves faster. That seems to be the message from our man in Milan, Mauro Gatti. He stresses, "It's always important to be updated on new technologies, softwares and solutions."

But why, if people are paying you to be creative, do you need to be ahead of the curve when it comes to tech stuff? "There's software that can simplify your life, forums full of answers to your problems, and websites that offer time-saving advice," says Mauro. Using the best tools for the job is what makes us human.

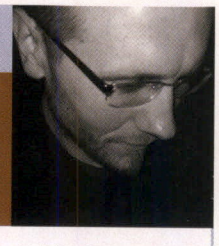
You can also look at it the other way: if you don't know how something works, nobody will ask you to do it. "Even *Flash* sites are no longer just bouncing balls animations," argues Mauro. "They can be a complex mix of video, heavy ActionScript, motion and stunning graphic." So as well as making your life easier, you're advised to keep abreast of the latest technology so that you don't get left behind.

The good news is there's no reason you should be: "It's good to spend an hour of your day browsing the web and seeking for tools or people that can help your business or solve a problem that is driving you mad." Mauro's advice is simple: keep your finger on the pulse.

13

Self promotion

John McFaul



People aren't going to come looking for you: it's down to you to get your work under the right noses...

> "A creative type intent on getting work must promote him or herself on a regular basis." John McFaul knows of no exceptions to this rule. "Kick-ass mailshots, business cards, stationery, a strong portfolio and a fresh, up-to-date, well-designed website." They all count, so don't miss any out.

There is an order of precedence though: "The website harbours the possibility of your work being seen by millions – globally." It's elementary statistics: "This is probably the single most important weapon in your attempt to get commissioned." It's not enough to just have a website though.

"Obviously," explains John, "a bad site will only put off those prospective employers." That would be a catastrophe so, although it might hurt the pocket, "a lot of time and perhaps money should be put into this early."

And if you're going to do it at all, don't be shy: "Just as the killer website is about to go live, a well-timed (and phrased) email to all those web portals around the globe could see your work in front of everyone!"

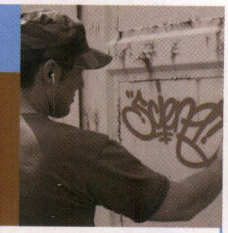
Even the best of the talent out there reinvents itself on a semi-regular basis: "Take control of your promotion to stay ahead of the game."

Land yourself big clients with a high quality website and eye-catching promotional materials.

14

Make it personal

123klan

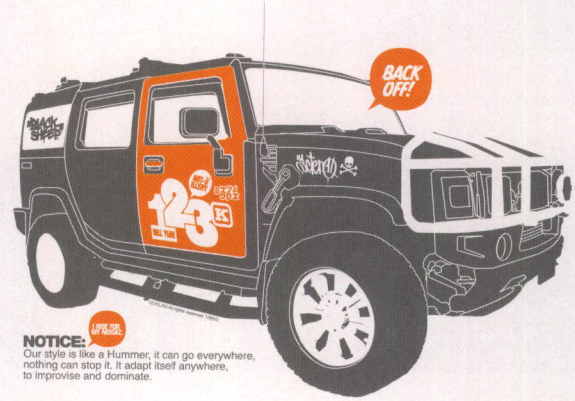


Keep your creativity alive by indulging your passions. This will act as a driving force behind your commercial work

> The 123klan is nothing if not dedicated to the fierce individualism of the graffiti ethic. "Do some personal artwork alongside your daily work," says Scien. "Create your own style and try something that nobody did before." Though it's not easy, you don't want to be another number. "Be different, be yourself," suggests Scien.

"Here at 123klan we don't separate personal from client stuff." There are historical reasons for this: "We were first known for our personal stuff." So when the first clients approached the klan, they said: "Hey I like your stuff, can you do this for me?" The response from Scien and co was: "Hell yeah! That's what we're best at!" This develops into what's known as a virtuous circle: "If we evolve graphically and can keep this evolution for a client, our stuff will be 200 per cent better for him." This makes everyone happy and keeps them coming back. "And, of course, we will be proud to show what we did as if it was a personal thing." Which it would be.

"To be true to yourself is just to be proud of what you do," says Scien. Whether that's personal or commercial, it doesn't matter. "If you're doing something that you enjoy, do it 100 per cent," he concludes.

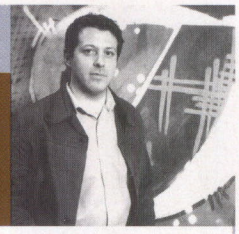

BACK OFF!
NOTICE:
Our style is like a Hummer, it can go everywhere, nothing can stop it. It adapt itself anywhere, to improvise and dominate.

Treat your commercial work with the same passion as your personal projects.

15

Collabor8

Roddy Llewellyn



Working with others on a project turns your collaborators into an extended network of recruitment consultants

> "Collaboration is the key for new designers." Roddy Llewellyn's pronouncement deserves further consideration, so let's hear what he has to say about it.

Computer Arts' Senior Art Editor is in a pragmatic mood. "Let's face it," he says, "there are more designers than ever before." It's a valid point: the number of graduates emerging from graphics courses of varying descriptions is increasing all the time. The amount of work available isn't.

"Collaboration gets you involved in the global community." In other words, it gets your name out there. "It's a great way of getting work from abroad and from closer to home as well," says Roddy, pointing to Tado, a now popular design firm.

"I remember Mike and Katie of Tado when they were straight out of college," recalls Roddy. "They've collaborated and become friends with so many people in the industry." One look at the links on its website ([w] www.tado.co.uk) will show you that. "So don't be afraid to share."

"Basically, someone could come to you with a brief and you could say you could manage it, with another design company in mind to do the job." If you haven't met anyone then this isn't going to happen, so make friends and recommend them. "And if they're true friends, they'll recommend you!"

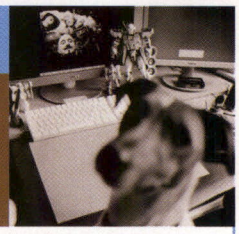
Tado started collaborating straight out of college. It's a great way to make friends and find work.

"Collaboration involves you in the global community"
Roddy Llewellyn

16

Globalisation

Benedict Campbell



Beware the ever-multiplying layers of approval which global advertising budgets tend to generate...

> Advertising has always been known for the layers of approval through which artwork must pass before it becomes 'fixed'. This situation has escalated in recent time thanks to the increasingly borderless nature of the digital domain.

"With big corporate clients there's often a lot of money involved," agrees Benedict Campbell. "It's easy to think 'this is the stuff!'." What they don't tell you is: "It's very easy to spend three months on one image." That's a long time by anyone's standards.

"When I first started, it was much simpler," Ben reminisces. "You were working for an art director. He might have a creative director, and they answered to a marketing manager." This situation would now be a godsend.

"Now you have a junior art director, senior art director, creative director, then on to a brand assistant..." This list goes on a bit before Ben concludes with: "That's just in the UK, then there's Europe and the rest of the world."

The point is, "You have to know all this before you get involved." Advertising work has glamour and profile but it can also be a testing environment. "There's a lot of politics, and nobody ever breaks it to you from the beginning just how much that will affect the job." You've been warned.

Working on international advertising campaigns can mean drawn-out approval processes.

17
Layer talk
Mauro Gatti

Getting to a point you never expected to reach can start with the simplest of steps...

> Mauro Gatti is an illustrator who likes to experiment with his software. And who can blame him: if the features are there, why not use them? First, though, you must discover them.

A Gatti favourite is layer effects. He'll even go as far as to say: "These are some of the most amazing things you can experiment with in *Photoshop*." Their power gives you a taste for adventure: "They can change the look of an image with just one click."

Even if you just add a layer filled with one colour, Mauro suggests, "You see what happens when you choose different layer effects. It can really offer you some new ideas or a new way to proceed."

Mauro recalls the need for a 'dirt look'. "You have just to add a new layer containing maybe an old book page or a picture of a wooden wall," he says. Once you've got this somewhere above your main layer, start flicking between the various layer effects. "It's pretty simple," says Mauro, "but sometimes you can get to a point you never expected!"

Mauro's signature 'dirt look' enables him to achieve unexpected results.

18
Rough 'em up a bit
Roddy Llewellyn

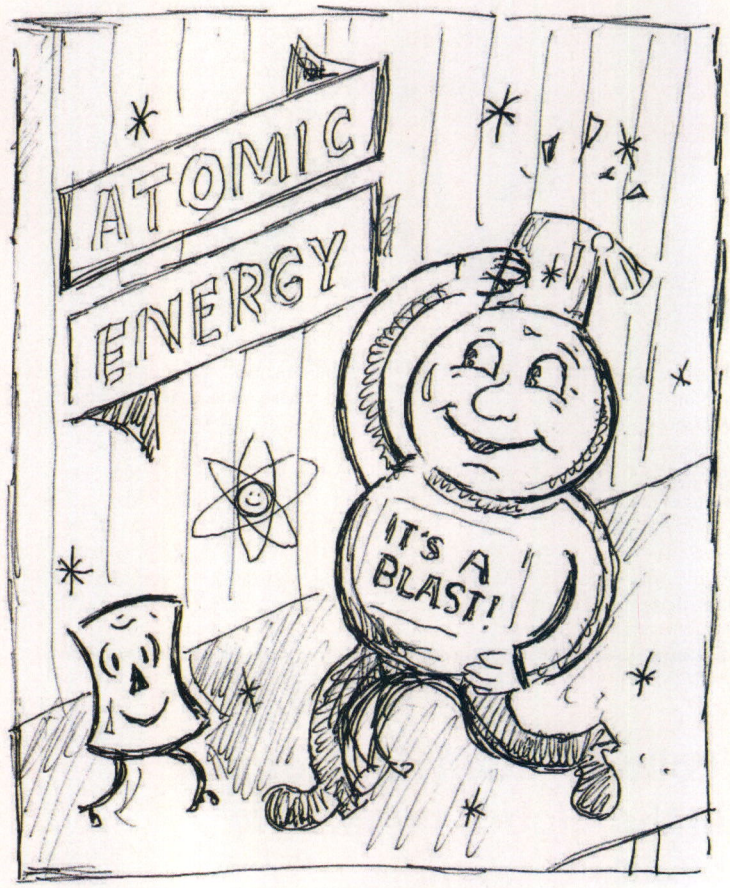
Always supply your clients with a rough. Surprises are rarely a good thing for art editors

> "It's amazing how many illustrators still don't provide roughs." Roddy Llewellyn, the esteemed Art Editor of *Computer Arts* magazine is not easily perturbed, but it can happen. Failure to supply a rough will get you halfway there.

"There's nothing worse than providing a finished piece of work that the client hasn't seen in progress," says Roddy. If it has to be re-done, all hell breaks loose, nerves get frayed and deadlines start to slip. "That's why it's so important for the designer," he explains. "It will save so much time in the long run."

Roddy then relates a cautionary tale which will have art editors everywhere twitching with suppressed rage. "We once got a very good illustrator from Brazil to do a cover image for us." That sounds like an interesting proposition.

"He was an artist I really admired and we gave him a two-week deadline." It all sounds feasible too, what with the global village and that. "We then heard nothing," sighs Roddy. "After many attempts we got the image two days late." It wasn't even a case of 'better late than never' though: "It was nothing like what we requested." Enough said...

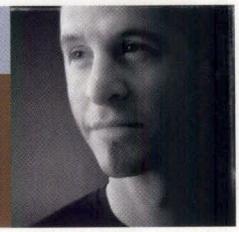


Derek Lea, a regular contributor to *Computer Arts*, appreciates the need for providing roughs.

19

Maintaining flexibility

Derek Lea



Making multiple versions of the same piece of work makes life easier if changes are ever required

> Illustration, like the other creative disciplines, is very often about providing a service. As such, there's frequently a need to adjust your work to suit the demands of your client. While having the personal flexibility to allow this is one thing, there's also a technical aspect to this problem.

Derek Lea is no stranger to this sort of situation and his advice is to be prepared for change. "Get in the habit of creating files and saving your work at various stages," he says. It's a logical thing to do but so often gets lost when you're on a roll: "If I'm going to drastically change something, I'll duplicate a layer and make the change on there, preserving the original layer with the visibility disabled."

Generating multiple versions of the same piece might seem like extra work, but if you're asked to re-set something to the way you had it a week ago, it'll save huge amounts of time.

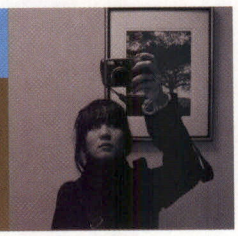
You may have great faith in your own work, in your art director and the client, but there's frequently an angle you haven't accounted for: "The art director has to answer to someone on their end." You never know when there will be a difficult client who will make endless revisions.

Saving multiple versions of your layered projects can save you a lot of time and frustration later.

20

Rework your images

Autumn Whitehurst



Don't call time on an image just because the client has signed it off. It can be reworked for your portfolio...

> "The version of this image that went to print was very different," Autumn Whitehurst reveals. "I chose to do this second version for my portfolio because I felt that I could push the sense of movement."

It pays to keep pushing your work in new directions, and in this case Autumn fought "a stubborn desire to keep things quiet." Having noticed that the majority of her work was very 'still', this piece provided an opportunity to shake things up. The amendments went like this: "I began by desaturating the colours so that I could make her hair a kind of bone white, nearly the same colour as the highlights in her skin." Next she dealt with her apparel: "I added her blouse and the beads, both of which seemed to help the composition."

And the final touch came with a judicious crop of the image: "Had I left the top of her head in, with all of that blowing hair, the image wouldn't move the same way." Having your own way with something creates movement all of its own.

Amending client-approved images for your portfolio can be a rewarding process.

21

Party on!

John McFaul

If you want to know how your contemporaries work, you'll have to get yourself on the guest list at their next viewing

> It's been said that the best way to judge a person is by the company they keep. John McFaul's advice is to keep good company. Really applying yourself to doing this can act as a course of self-improvement for the young artist.

"It's important as a fledgling illustrator/designer type to frequent as many of these 'private view' things as you can," reveals John. That's where you'll find like-minded souls: "Only by doing so will you reap the benefit of all that knowledge on offer." And perhaps even make a contribution of your own.

"Mixing with those creatives who you regard highly, in their natural habitat, is something everyone must do in order to fully understand the mindset of these gods." If you don't, then they will remain as remote as gods; their intentions, goals and methods forever obscure.

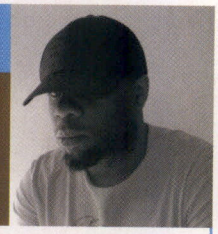
"Stumbling up to those who you admire with an arsenal of probing questions can only happen after a few 'free' drinks." This may sound like a dangerous situation, and perhaps it is, but there's truth in the saying 'nothing ventured, nothing gained'.

John McFaul recommends you go to as many private views as possible to meet other creatives. This isn't a licence to become a stalker though. "Don't become a nuisance!" says John.

22

Don't be a fool for love

Henry Obasi

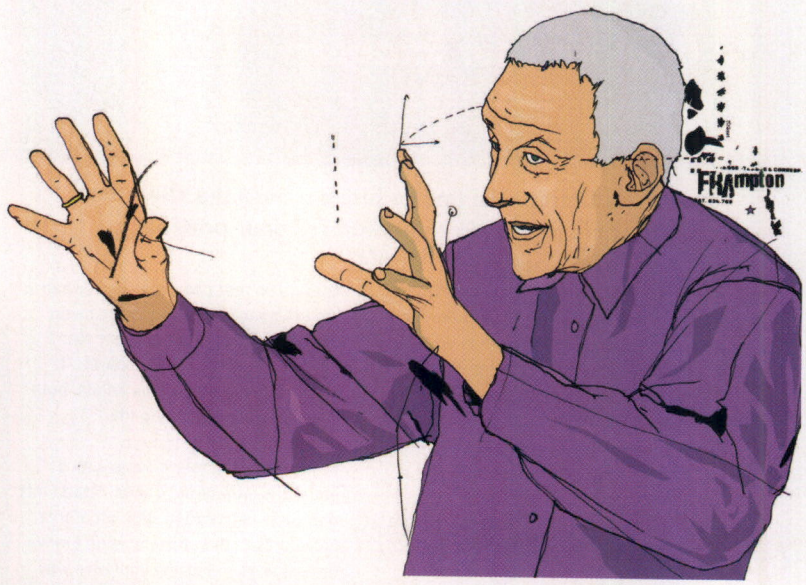


Don't let those romantic intentions get the better of you where your work is concerned...

> If you are "an illustrator in the twilight weeks, or maybe months, of a new relationship," Henry Obasi has some important advice for you.

"Never, under any circumstances," he says, can you break this rule. This cannot be emphasised enough. This rule must remain firm, says Henry. "NO MATTER HOW: 1. Fit the girl is. 2. You believe this relationship is gonna last forever. 3. She begs you to... 4. The same as one." You should know better than to "EVER PROMISE TO DO A PORTRAIT OF HER!" Got that? Because, as more important matters continue to arise at work and time becomes increasingly short, "You'll always find that task will just never get done."

You will have turned your talent into a rod for your own back: "That loving promise you made in the early days of what you thought was the big 'L' will soon become as hollow as your worst excuse for a late deadline." And you know how hollow that is.



Stick to safe subjects for your portraiture work. Henry can't emphasise enough that it's a very bad idea to say you'll do a portrait of the woman (or man) you love.

"That task will just never get done" Henry Obasi

23

Concept

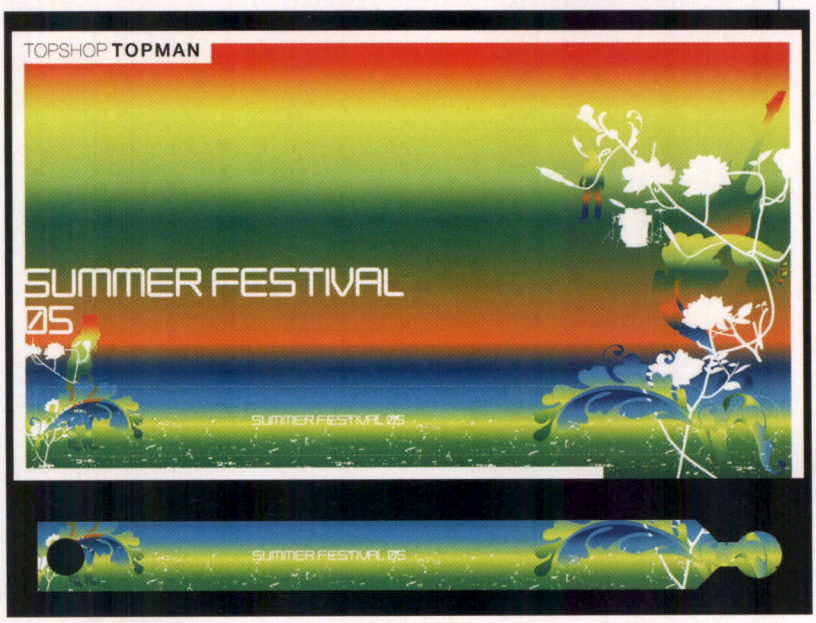
Simon Yuen

Develop a good theoretical angle on your project to give you leverage when it comes to the design stage

> "We pride ourselves on our approach," says GR/DD's Simon Yuen. "We encourage junior designers not to go into a project immediately from a stylistic point of view. We always want them to look at the merits of the project from a conceptual standpoint." The idea here is to ensure that the work has a firm foundation.

This fits nicely with the idea that the computer is not necessarily the first port of call creatively. The GR/DD team brainstorms the concept first, giving subsequent design work a core around which to develop. "However, it manifests itself visually," says Simon. "It's important that the solution has some thinking behind it."

The concept has to come first. This is about ordering your thoughts, giving your creative instincts a chance to function. "The fact that it ends up visually stunning comes very often from having a good concept," concludes Simon. Without that initial decisiveness you'd quickly be clutching at straws and running out of ideas. This approach should be a confidence booster.

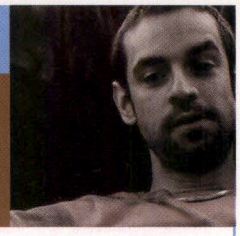


The more thought you put into the concept, the greater the chance of a visually stunning result.

24

Business or pleasure

David Foldvari



Although mixing the two sometimes seems like a good idea, it rarely ever is...

> The advice given here is very straightforward: "Never work for friends." It might seem like the best idea you ever had, the perfect working arrangement, but, says David Foldvari, "It always ends in tears." Business and pleasure just don't mix.

"If an art director from an advertising agency tells you they don't like the drawing you just spent three days on, you think 'fair enough'," reasons the Brighton-based illustrator. "If someone from your mate's band says the same thing, you tend to take it as a personal insult."

This is obviously a source of tension, one you'd do well to avoid. Why? Because you can. "Plus, it feels wrong taking money from your mates," continues David. "You'll either feel guilty when they ask how much you charge, or you'll do something for them for free."

The second of these solutions takes us full circle: "You'll get very pissed off when they ask you to change stuff." This is what they call a lose-lose situation, so don't make the mistake of thinking you can beat the odds. "It's horrible either way," concludes David.

If a mate starts picking holes in your work, you'd have to be made of stone not to take it personally.

25

What to show where

Mauro Gatti

Use your website to make sure the right people know you're pushing the creative envelope

> First thing's first, says Mauro: "You need to improve your skills and invest all your time in finding a style: a way to be different from the thousands of designers around you."

Don't expect this to be easy. "It's a day-by-day school," he says. "Little steps towards positioning yourself as a designer with a style that people recognise and appreciate." That's the light at the end of the tunnel.

The web is the biggest resource for inspiration and materials but, cautions Mauro, "Keep in mind that, even if it's more simple to go with the trend of the moment, you need to invest a lot of time in experimenting, promoting and staying awake at night."

Of course you'll want to get noticed, and for this there is one way above all others: "Use your website." Not only that but: "It's a good choice to show everything you do, from the craziest to the most commercial stuff."

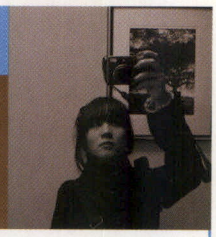
The dividends will start coming in when clients ask for you by name, or, says Mauro, "When a client chooses you because of your unique touch, you will forget all your nights of pain, cigarettes and coffees."

Develop a unique style that people will grow to recognise and appreciate.

26

New beginnings

Autumn Whitehurst



Your own work often holds clues and inspiration for your future, as Autumn Whitehurst found with Prada Wedge...

> "Sometimes less is more." Autumn Whitehurst's statement is so familiar it seems straightforward, but what does it mean in practice?

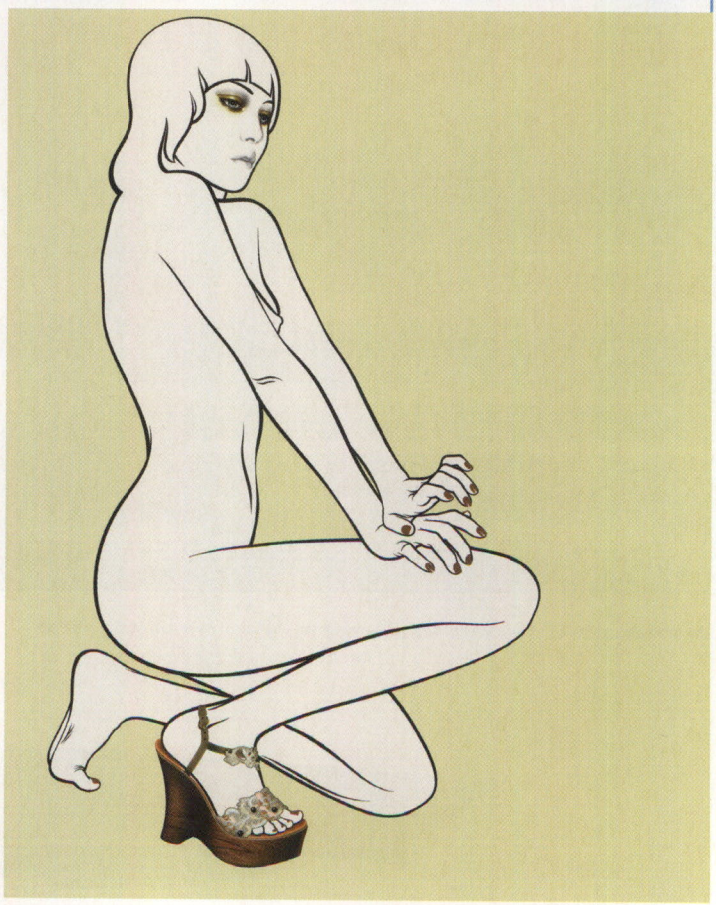
Autumn begins by setting the scene: "I had been playing with some old files in which I'd rendered every bit of flesh on the girls." Looking for a way to pare down the work, she began stripping away layers, which sounds like it could be therapeutic.

"There was just too much rendering. It was just too damn much!" she exclaims. As this process was going on, a job came in with a quick turnaround, the client asking for things to be kept simple.

Autumn was already on the case: "This was the first image that I had done in a while in which there was so little rendering." Not only that but, "I felt liberated!"

Ever the perfectionist, Autumn muses, "I didn't push the advantages of keeping it simple as far as I could." It's a new beginning though, and that is a bonus: "Going through the motions can be such a buzz kill."

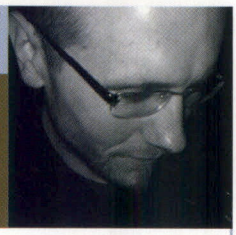
Autumn's illustration for Prada Wedge is low on rendering and high on impact.



27

Mile deep colour

John McFaul



How to meet the demands of sexy illustration by using *Photoshop* layers and blending modes...

>"Contemporary fashion has it that it's imperative to imbue your work with richness, decadence and 'mile deep' colour if you want sexy illustration," says John McFaul, who is head and shoulders above most illustrators when it comes to his use and understanding of colour.

"Layers are your friend," believes John. And the more popular you are the better: "You need hundreds of them. Colour on colour on colour..." The more the merrier as you work at producing images that people can fall into.

"The most striking images are those whose colour seamlessly glides from tone to tone with decadent abandon," says John. If you want to develop this oceanic feel in your work then it has to be layered. There is no shortcut if you want it "mile-deep and hyper-real."

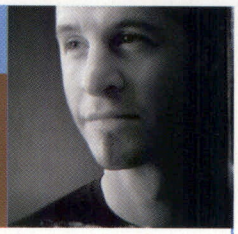
John asks, "How do we deliver images with these characteristics? Only by spending days playing in and around with *Photoshop* layers and their blending modes." So, get stacking: "It's the only way to fully understand the capabilities of colour."

John McFaul demonstrates the sumptuous effects you can achieve with layers.

28

Examine your technique

Derek Lea



New avenues constantly open up as you battle to solve thorny technical problems...

> Though it's easy to get used to the idea that the creative impulse comes from inside and drives a path before you, very often you'll discover that it's your problem-solving capacity which brings home the bacon. So, says Derek Lea, "Pay attention to the necessary aspects of the process as they can result in the birth of a new style."

Derek tells the story of when he first started illustrating within *Photoshop:* "My aim was realistic and photographic collage." Nothing wrong with that, except the tools were getting in the way. "I only had a 35mm camera," explains Derek, "and by the time I increased my scanned photos to the desired size, they were too grainy and soft to use." Problem.

"So I began literally painting over every photographic detail within *Photoshop*." While this pulled the images away from photography towards illustration, it worked: "It became my signature style." The work started to follow as this innovative new technique began to attract the attention of art directors with money to spend.

Derek Lea's illustrative technique was used for this cover illustration for *Computer Arts*.

RULE#1 WORK HARD

29

Keep the fires burning

James Bowden

Don't let the daily grind at the studio stop you from being passionate about your work

> "As a junior designer, it's very easy to get into the day-to-day running of doing your design work because your boss tells you to," but James Bowden of GR/DD wants you to overcome that temptation. You have to: "Develop a thick skin so you maintain that drive and passion."

It's a familiar situation to most: "Because you're working to a look and feel that a senior designer has developed and you're just implementing that on various surfaces, creativity tends to go out the window a bit." James has been there, so he knows what it's like: "Particularly in large companies, you're very much a cog in the wheel."

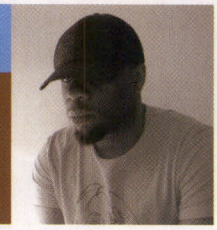
Now it might get you into a spot of trouble but, according to James, this is the only way to keep the fires burning: "Answer the brief, but the underlying passion should be there to push that and try and break out of that at all times." Don't be overprotective of your work but, says James, "Don't bow to what authority is telling you to do. Remain headstrong."

A CD cover by James Bowden. "Remain headstrong" is his advice for maintaining creative drive.

30

The bad mixer

Henry Obasi



Don't make the mistake of letting your liquid lifestyle interfere with professional work flow

> "I have been mad close to disaster," confides Henry Obasi, "stupidly trying to balance a can of Sprite, a half eaten salmon bagel and operate my Wacom, all under the pressure of an impending deadline." It may look clever when Henry does it, but you would be mad to risk the consequences of juggling food and drink products around expensive kit.

Not that Henry is over-confident. He'll balance a bagel and a tin of pop without incident but, "My heart goes out to my mate, a wicked illustrator, who had the unfortunate catastrophe of mixing Diet Coke with a brand new G4 laptop." And you know Diet Coke and high-tech electronics are never a great combination.

"His computer and all his work was proper trashed," and, says a sorrowful Henry, "totally un-retrievable." The effervescent quality which makes Coke the real thing "zapped the mother, logic and all other boards on his machine." So a few simple words of warning from Henry: "Keep all food, liquids, children – anything that drips – away from your machines." It's for your protection. "Please."

This illustration of President Bush and Condoleezza Rice for *King Magazine USA* may never have seen the light of day if Henry wasn't so adept at balancing fizzy drinks.

the top ten

10 Find the right balance with your clients

Whether clients become friends or remain at a professional distance, developing a strong working relationship is essential

Rob Coke, Jeff Knowles

> Developing a happy client relationship is crucial to any job, yet it's strangely difficult to quantify exactly how to go about it. Knowing when to be a buddy and when to be a professional is something that has to be learned over time. There's always a proper balance to be struck, but, like any relationship, you just have to work at it.

"It might be a cliché to say that good clients should become friends," says Rob Coke, "but they're putting a lot of trust in you and you should at least strive for mutual respect." Remember that not everyone is a designer, thankfully. And while your clients are paying for your knowledge and insight, he says, "That doesn't give you the right to patronise them or tell them what to think."

"Having a good rapport with the client can make the working process run smoothly," says Jeff Knowles. "Getting that right is something we believe in at Research Studios." Unlike many established agencies, Research doesn't put middle men between client and designer. "That direct line of communication provides clarity for the designer when trying to understand the brief," explains Jeff. "And it allows the client to understand the work being produced."

Approach with care

If you're trying to get something across, it's always best to preface your remarks, and allow people to see a little bit of the workings out: "Always explain briefly why you've chosen a particular approach before you present the work." In Rob's experience, this helps smooth the way: "But don't be surprised when they don't get as excited as you about the downstroke of a particular letterform."

It's not that they don't like you, you're just geeking them out. "Remember" adds Rob, "they are probably as much of a geek as you are in their own field, and you don't necessarily want to hear about that." So extend them the same courtesy and stick to the salient points.

The whole thing is about understanding. Both parties need to know where they stand. "Basic human instincts come into play when getting to know someone," argues Jeff, and generally you realise quite quickly whether or not you hit it off with a person. The difference here is: "If you don't like the person, you still have to work for them." That's where professional etiquette comes in.

"I tend to find if I don't have a great deal in common with the client, the relationship will end up at the professional end of the spectrum," says Jeff. "If I get on with the client then I operate from the friendship end of the spectrum." This is the ideal situation from where: "You can build a relationship based on trust and honesty." Professionalism can be found in the work that's created, but, concludes Jeff, "It can take more of a back seat."

> **"They are probably as much of a geek as you are"**
>
> **Rob Coke**

tribeca ISSEY MIYAKE A collaborative space
Continuing work in progress Frank Gehry, Gordon Kipping, Issey Miyake, Naoki Takizawa, Alejandro Gehry, Neville Brody, Makiko Minagawa, Ian Wright, Leif Ove Andsnes and others to come.
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design research studios london

Rob Coke's publicity for Juxtapose nights at Geisha (above) and Jeff Knowles' ad for the Tribeca Issey Miyake store (left). You should always strive for a mutually happy working relationship with your clients.

09 Stick to your favourite art director

If you find an art director you're always happy to work with, don't do anything to jeopardise the relationship

Benedict Campbell, Derek Lea

> "The trick is, once you work well with an art director, stick with them." Benedict Campbell could curl your toes with tales of the alternative. "Once you connect with someone, you need to maintain that connection." Derek Lea agrees: "Turnover is high in this business and you've got to follow the people you like wherever they go." People who give you a chance to grow: "I have regular clients who're flexible and open to new things, who give me creative freedom when it comes to trying new techniques and styles."

Those are the clients you need to keep hold of. "Relish people like that and always go the extra mile when they let you pursue an idea of your own," says Derek. If you're happy then chances are the results are going to be that much better.

Benedict takes a slightly different perspective and argues that the best art directors are those that know what they want. "They're usually damn good to work for because they fight to ensure that everything looks good." But there is another kind: "The ones that just role over whenever there's a problem. They are a nightmare." That's why it's so important to get the structure nailed down: "One minute they say 'It's brilliant and they love it'. Later that day they call back and say 'Actually, there's a problem'."

Derek has had some bad experiences of his own: "There have been periods in my career where I've worked on high paying and prestigious jobs." You'd think that would make anyone happy, but no. "Although the money was good, I was unhappy and longed for those nickel and dime newspaper illos that were more creative."

People have long memories

And if you find yourself working with someone you don't get on with, it doesn't pay to dig your heels in either. "I know people that just stick to their guns," says Benedict, getting a faraway look in his eye, "but there are only so many people in the industry and they come back many years later in another, better job." If you pissed them off before, you can bet they'll remember it. By the same token, follow those you do get on with: "Send e-mails with samples of the new things you're working on regularly so they know what you're up to." Even break one of the other golden rules: "Take on a job or two below your regular rate just to keep the working relationship going." If it keeps a fruitful relationship going, it'll be worth it in the long run.

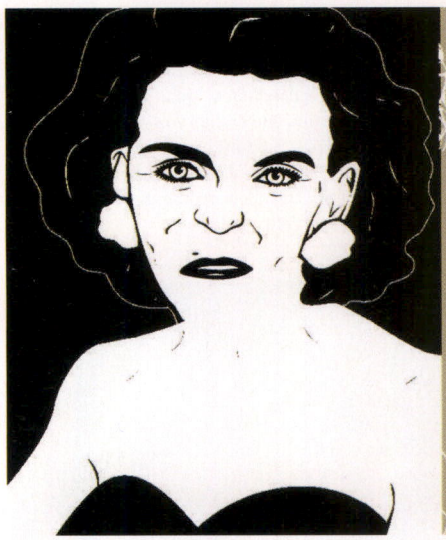
"So," Derek concludes, "go the extra mile for the art directors and clients you like." You need to make a living, so don't be a push-over but remember: "You're an illustrator because you're an artist first." So follow people that allow you to pursue your artistic goals.

Above: Derek Lea sleeps best when he's working for clients who give him a lot of creative freedom.
Right: Benedict Campbell warns that some art directors "can be a nightmare."

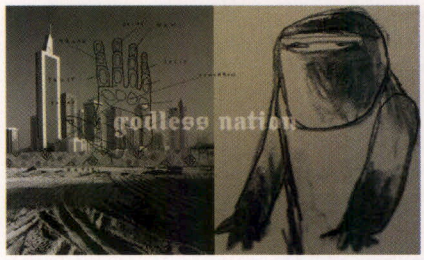
08 Know your strengths and limitations

Understanding when to call on others to complement your own skills is an important lesson to learn

Lars Harmsen, Ed Templeton



Above and below: Various works by Lars Harmsen, who stresses it's essential to work to your strengths.



If you're never going to be a brilliant designer, Ed Templeton suggests you work with someone who is.

> "I think it's very important to be honest with yourself," says Lars Harmsen. "The first obstacle is often the time schedule; the second obstacle is your skill." Get the measure of those two things and you have a recipe for a happy life. Get them wrong and you have late nights and performance anxiety to look forward to.

Ed Templeton breaks your options down into three categories, dependent on ability. The first option is just to be brilliant: "That's for the one per cent of brilliant people out there." The next category, which Ed puts at around 20 per cent of the field, is: "Aspire to be brilliant and if you don't achieve it on this job, then try to achieve brilliance on the next." A worthy ambition.

That leaves 79 per cent of the design population who, according to Ed, should: "Work for or with someone who is brilliant, work hard and learn everything you can from them, help and support them and become a great team player." Nobody said it was going to be easy, but there's no reason why this shouldn't be a fulfilling role.

"Try to focus on your best skills"
Lars Harmsen

Lars picks up the trail in a practical frame of mind: "It's important to be on time. That means not making promises you can't keep." This is more complicated than it sounds because rush jobs don't count. "It makes no sense to work through the night before a presentation," says Lars. There's too much chance you'll sell yourself short.

Accept your abilities

In terms of ability, it's always hard to admit you aren't at the top of the pile. The temptation is always there to try and do everything yourself. Lars tells an interesting story about this: "My wife is a much better cook than me so my only chance to compete is to be the 'master of the grill'." Take pride in the things you do well, and cede pole position to others where appropriate. You have to become design's 'master of the grill'.

The picture is bright once you've got to grips with exactly what it is you are good at. "If you let go a bit, you end up working on some great things," says Ed. You can do everything, but that might not result in the best possible piece of work. It's all about knowing what your goal is and deciding the best way to get there: "You have to be able to understand when your skills don't match and get someone else in to do it."

This naturally gets you into a more directorial role where detecting and correctly applying the talents of others becomes the art itself, but this is something that has to be learned from scratch. "But," says Lars, "if you try to focus on your best skills, you will have more fun, be more efficient and produce better work." That's the bottom line.

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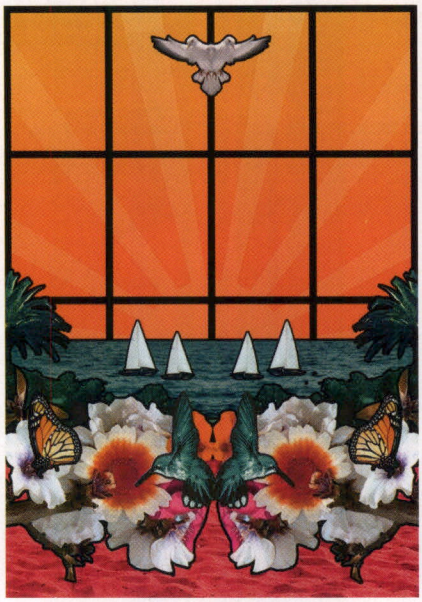
07 Get the mechanics right

The technical aspect of design is being put on the back burner by the demands of 'creativity'. Standards must be maintained!

Rob Coke, Neil Summerour

> "Come on, think about it," asks Neil Summerour, "you wouldn't choose a surgeon purely on the basis of whether or not he does really great stitching. You'd want to know that what he's doing in there is right and will continue to work right the first time." Since your work is very often a primary means of communication, "The same goes for a designer."

Studio Output's Rob Coke points to the most common reason for poor mechanics: "We so rarely see designers who understand what happens to a piece of work once it leaves their computer." A shortfall of knowledge in this department is limiting, but not in a way which is obvious if you stay sat in front of your computer.



Understanding your craft

"When people work through any artistic process from start to finish," says Rob, "there's an automatic connection with the work that comes through the understanding of their craft." For whatever reason, this connection is becoming weaker and weaker: "To a certain extent this is something which has been lost in graphic design."

> **"Great fluff without technical discipline"**
>
> **Neil Summerour**

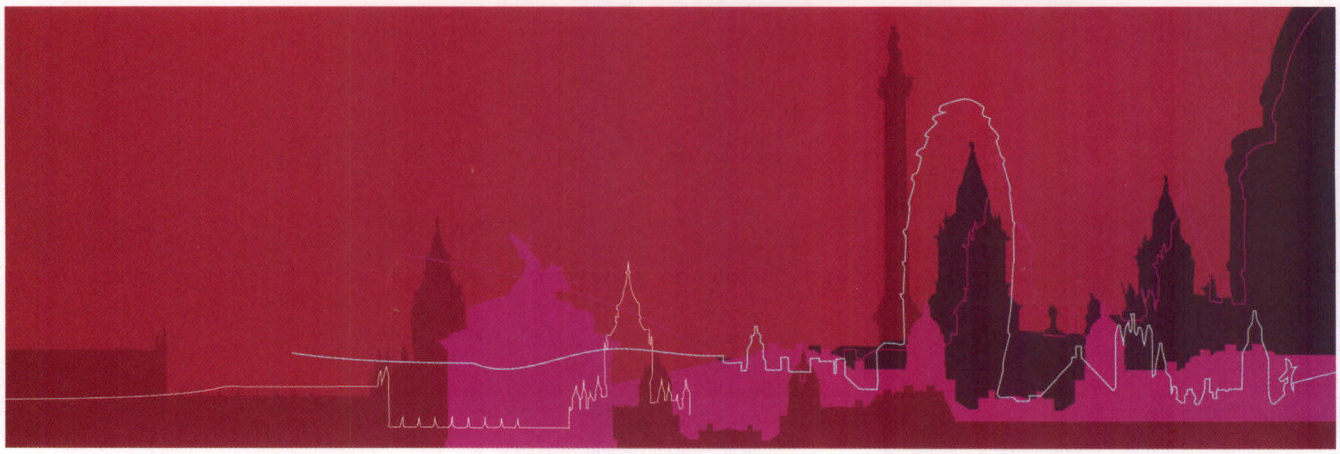
The shame of it is that the work itself could be inspired but that's not enough on its own, cautions Neil Summerour: "Great fluff without technical discipline, without understanding the proper prepping of image and font and file, will turn the next great design piece into a flop. So keep in mind bleed, fonts and their support files, appropriate image size and resolution."

This all sits quite nicely with not going straight to the computer but, Rob believes, "There's more to it than that, because sometimes, going straight to the computer is totally appropriate for the job." The design process has been sped up by the computer and this sometimes leads clients to assume the work is easy.

But the reality is, according to Rob, "A good designer is making a series of quick decisions based upon what they've learnt from the client, insight about the consumer, and also their knowledge of techniques and materials."

Now, if that knowledge just isn't there, maybe the client has a point. "Simply knowing what a printing press can or can't do, or what effect a certain ink will have when it overprints another, can lead to experimental work which pushes design forward," says Rob. Not knowing, not making sure that everything is in 'order under the hood' — that's what holds design back.

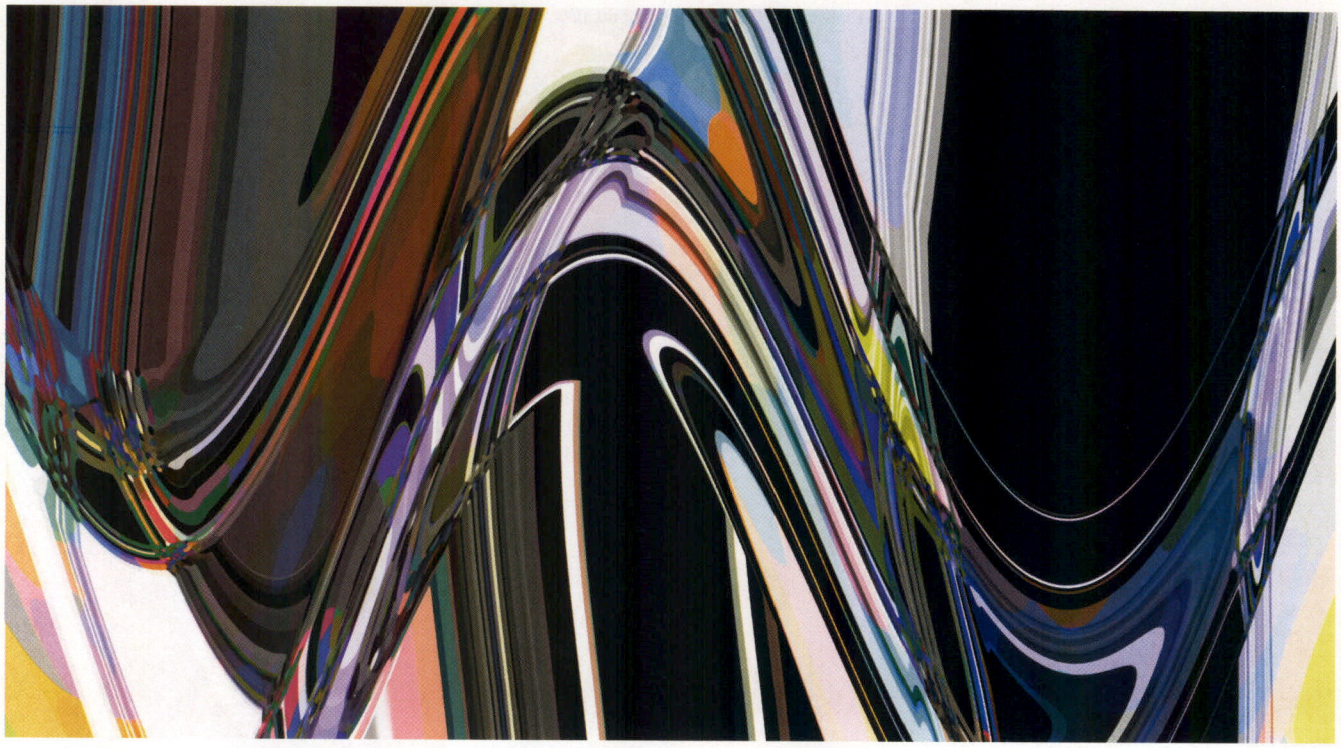
Top and bottom: Rob Coke clearly understands his craft. Above: Neil Summerour compares design to surgery.



06 Learn from your mistakes

Mistakes are a natural part of the creative process. It's how you deal with them that counts...

Peter Saville, David Carson, John McFaul



> "Trevor Key was a good friend of mine," recalls Peter Saville. "One day, out of the blue..." Peter pauses to recall a sunny day, bowling through the countryside in Trevor's car: "How did he put it?" This is how he put it: "Have you noticed that we only learn things when we make mistakes."

Though Trevor is sadly no longer with us, his thoughts have stood the test of time: "It's through making mistakes that you actually learn something," concludes Peter. "Trevor was fairly philosophical." The nature of creativity is closely bound up with the random. It's how we deal with those mistakes that frequently reveals itself to be inspiration.

John McFaul lends weight to this theory: "The search for individuality throws up many mistakes but these mistakes are more often than not ultimately inspirational and directional." The task is one of integration: "We learn from them and slip them, as tools, into our workflow."

It's a familiar feeling to anyone attempting to create something original. "All too often we are sat in front of our (far too clinical) machines intent on creating that something wonderful and ground breaking only to see it fall so very short of those goals," says John, "once again!"

He continues: "The great work you see everywhere, and admire, is born of process."

Saville Associates' waste paintings came about by accident when Howard Wakefield and Paul Hetherington were "messing around one evening." Peter says: "The great thing about the waste paintings was that we were recycling last week's pixels."

"Don't get stuck in tunnel vision"

David Carson

And mistakes are a natural evolution of process. "By preventing these mistakes from happening, you're keeping that illustrative tool bag of yours short of a few implements of individuality." Don't let that happen. It's more of a seat-of-the-pants ride but the pay-off is full of possibility.

Even David Carson is willing to chance his arm on this one: "Some of the best work comes from mistakes." There is a caveat though: "It doesn't mean because it's a mistake it's good, but if you can be open to things you're not expecting, sometimes those can be the best results." What this comes down to is being confident enough to give mistakes a chance to feed your creativity. "Don't get stuck in tunnel vision on your way to what you think is the best solution," David advises. Keep your options open.

Don't despair

Not every mistake will end with a genius-style solution, because some are just plain mistakes. "Things can go wrong in a bad way too," cautions Peter. "But if they do, you've let them go wrong." Trouble-shooting has to be part of your repertoire. Whatever you do though, "Don't ever despair." Nobody is immune — if you at least learn from the situation, it's something you won't do again.

Just remember, says Peter, "Every time things go brilliantly, you don't really learn anything. It's only when things go wrong that you actually calculate what the problem was." You devise tools and solutions to get you through, and in the heat of that process something exciting could be forged. John McFaul sums it up: "Make mistakes!"

05 The price is right

You must put a price on your work which makes both you and your client happy...

Mauro Gatti, John McFaul, Derek Lea

> Mauro Gatti's right, there's just no getting away from it: "One of the first things to keep in mind when you start working is money." You may have got into the design world on the strength of your creative credentials but the bank manager only speaks one language: cash.

And it's not just a concern for those setting up on their own, points out John McFaul: "Whether you're ready to slip nicely into the ranks of that larger company or you're prepared to set out on your own, you must understand your worth." Don't settle for less than what you're worth: "Setting up on your own brings with it a multitude of problems, but none more so than putting a price on your work and your time."

It's difficult to know how to play the game in the early days, says Derek Lea: "When you're first starting out, you may be nervous and desperate for work." Even so, you have to be careful if you bid low for the work: "If you do this, don't skimp on the illustration or cut corners, thinking that you're not getting paid enough." Cheap or not, you will be judged on the quality of your work.

It pays to have experience

"Obviously," notes John, "someone who has been in the industry a while can command a larger fee than someone who is new." And there's nothing like getting info first-hand: "Ask as many people as possible how they put a price on their work." You should take into account hourly and daily rates, usage of artwork, and experience. In the final analysis, though, it's a market economy and you have to find your own unique selling point in terms of cash as well as visuals.

And even if you get the price kind of right, your troubles don't end there. "When you start earning money, don't waste it because you feel rich," cautions Mauro Gatti. "The first year I started to be a designer I felt like being a millionaire and I wasted all my money on toys and geek gadgets." This turned out not to be the best strategy: "At the end of the year I had to pay taxes, I thought of escaping to a tropical country because I was broke!"

Finally, it's a good idea to remember Derek Lea's point: "Your quality of work is what keeps clients coming back. If you do a half-hearted job, you'll be unhappy with it and the word will get around that your product is a dog. "That's the kiss of death," says Derek. "Always deliver a quality product. If the budget's not there, simply don't take on the job."

"Always deliver a quality product"
Derek Lea

Top: Derek Lea tells you not to take on the job if the budget's not there. Above: Mauro Gatti advises you to keep an eye on your bank balance. Right: John McFaul's logo. He recommends asking fellow illustrators how they put a price on their work.

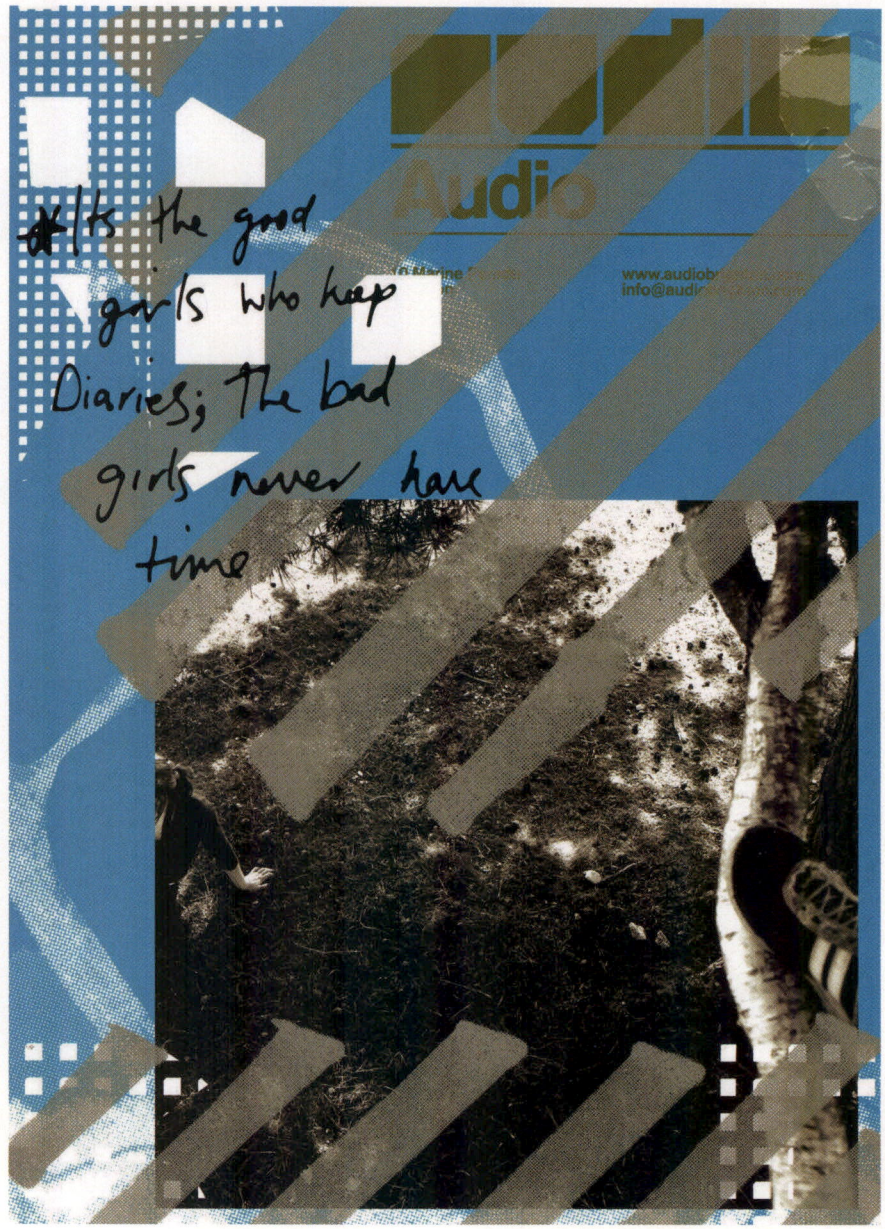
04 Pen and paper

The computer is not the source of your creativity; it's a tool, and a potentially limiting one at that

Bruno Maag, Ed Templeton

> "Make sure you don't start things on the computer," says Red Design's Ed Templeton. "It's the very first thing I say to anyone who works with me." Before you create anything, before any designing is done, there's a process to be gone through: "Start by discussion, then research," and finally, "with a sketch."

But so often you'll end up on the Mac anyway, what's the point? "It's not so much laziness," says Bruno Maag. "People work as hard on the computer, but as a tool it's restrictive." It gives you a kind of creative tunnel vision: "Because everything always looks finished, it's very easy to fall into the trap of having just one idea then carrying on in the stream of that idea." And here Bruno highlights the real problem: the fact that the machine is seductive while at the same time compromises your creativity.



Don't limit your options

There's no need to over-react and start throwing machines out of the window: "There's nothing wrong with the computer; it's just, if you're looking for options, it can be limiting." For Ed it's about "establishing that the computer is a tool, not the creative thing itself." Like Bruno, he sees

"People work as hard on a computer, but as a tool it's restrictive"
Bruno Maag

the computer as potentially limiting in the early stages of a project. "If you sit down to come up with an idea in front of *Illustrator* then you've already decided how it's going to look," says Ed.

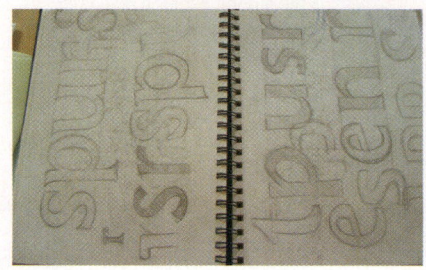
"It's like when you're cooking," Bruno embarks on a cooking analogy. "If you only have a wok, you cook one type of food." Bruno prefers a varied diet: "Add a Le Creuset casserole and you immediately start to open up the possibilities." And since you are what you eat, it pays to keep your options open.

Uncontrollable urge

More seriously, though, Bruno is concerned that the rush to the computer is symptomatic of a larger move away from the traditional skills which designers used to hold in such high esteem. "Most college students feel uncomfortable about doing something with a pencil because they can't control it." And as a result they deprecate the hand-drawn in favour of the more controllable machine. "It very quickly becomes apparent that they don't see the pencil as an option."

Bruno points out that design firms generally don't want "Mac monkeys". Software can be learned quickly: "We want people who can conceptualise information and put it in an interesting way." In this endeavour, the pen and paper is so much more flexible.

"It's just laziness. I find myself guilty of it as well," confesses Ed. "It's because the majority of the time you're going to end up using the computer to actually do the thing, put it together and output it." But don't let that knowledge stop you from doing a proper investigation. "That is your thinking time." Don't waste it.

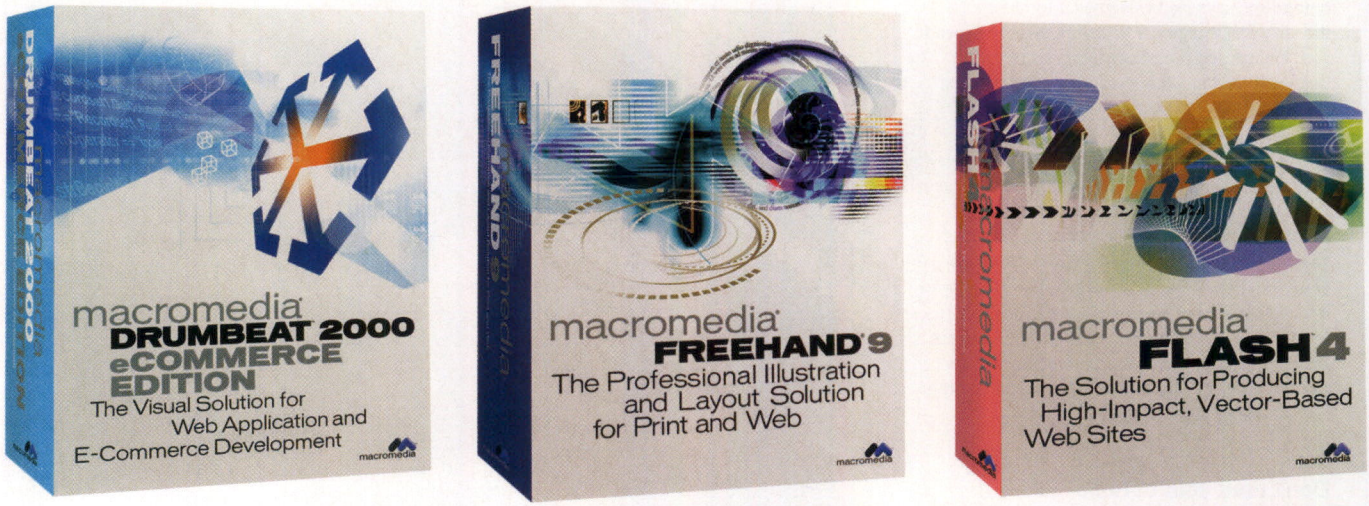


Top: Red Design flyer advertising a club night in Brighton. Above: Bruno Maag's sketchbook is full of type ideas.

03 Design to reveal, not conceal

Neville Brody's plea for a more human approach to design, in which the designer invites people to engage with the work...

Neville Brody



"The Macromedia stuff was all intentionally open and engaging," explains Neville Brody.

> Neville Brody's top ten suggestion is, in his own words, "a bit of an odd one." Conceived nearly 30 years ago, when Neville himself was a student, the purpose of this advice is to make design a tool of communication not manipulation. "If you're going to communicate then you should communicate as widely as possible," he says.

"What that means is that you should be as transparent as possible because you're customer-facing." You have an audience, the consumer, as well as a client to think about. "This," adds Neville, "leads to the idea that you don't have just one client in a job; you also have the person that has to live with your work."

> **"Client understanding of design standards is getting better"**
> **Neville Brody**

So what is the ambition for the revealing designer? "Advertising conceals," is how the explanation begins. "It's trying to get a prescribed outcome in the thought of the person that's looking at it." It is manipulative; that's its goal. Design which serves advertising will be likewise characterised. Its opposite? "We've always tried to approach things as fairly open," responds Neville. Making the design fill a gap between the thing and its market or audience, "Allowing people to engage with the work and, kind of, come to their own conclusions." This is how Research Studios operates.

Entering into a dialogue

"The Macromedia stuff was all intentionally open and engaging," says Neville, by way of an example. "We try to treat our work as a dialogue as much as possible where advertising is a monologue." It wasn't easy to convince Macromedia that it needed an abstract piece but, "It worked very well." It was communication, not indoctrination.

This all sounds a bit gentlemanly – it can't be easy to convince clients that they need a dialogue. "Part of the designer's role isn't exactly to educate the client because that's a bit arrogant." This had better be good: "It's to help a client understand the consequences of putting all this work out there."

Neville sees the designer not necessarily as a conscience but certainly as a conscious agent. In other words, you're aware of the final destination for your work – you know its purpose. There are other people involved who have to live with the work you produce.

"Client understanding of design standards is getting better," says Neville. That's encouraging but he remains to be convinced that "they know that the public is actually a fairly educated partner." Part of the designer's job then is to help the client understand design itself, but also its public. "That's why we've always made our clients part of the team," says Neville.

Consequently, there is no management level at Research Studios. Instead clients work directly with designers. The ideal situation being that, "The client will come to us with a problem and we will create the brief as part of the solution." And if the client comes with a fully fledged brief? "The reality is, we are the trained experts," observes Neville. It's your job to ensure that your work is transparent.

02 The solution is in the problem

The most telling designs take their cue from the nature of the problem they solve

Peter Saville

> The inimitable Peter Saville credits another Pentagram alumni, John McConnell, as the source of this insight. "It's a brilliant one," says Peter. "John McConnell told me one day, just in passing." Dramatic pause... "The solution is in the problem."

It comes down to a question of understanding. Looking at the brief you're faced with and extracting its essence. "The unique solution lies in the peculiarities of the problem at hand," says Peter, alluding to the fact that there are only a set number of possible ways in which a given problem can be solved. The most elegant of those is the design solution.

"Take Alan Fletcher's V&A logo." According to Peter, this presented a bit of a job. "The V and the A are great," says Peter, but the problem is the ampersand in between. "In the end, he made it part of the A." There, the solution was, quite literally, staring the designer in the face. In other cases, it may require a bit of sleuthing.

Every job is unique

In the most successful designs, says Peter, "It's the unique circs that bring about the unique solution." The problem is itself the prime cause of the solution because, "Without those circs you would not discover that answer." Why would you, without the problem demanding that you come up with some kind of solution? You wouldn't just spontaneously design a logo. You could, but what would be the point?

It's a kind of chicken-and-egg scenario. "The solution being in the problem is quite mind boggling actually," agrees Mr Saville, sounding very pleased with himself. The whole thing implies a way of acting, an order to things. You solve problems as and when they occur because they bring with them the ingredients you'll need to mix up the antidote, to use a pharmacological analogy. It's your diagnostic skills that are needed.

So, when you sit and stare at the thing and say "I can't do it because of this" or "Here are these factors ganging up and it's because of all this that we can't do it," just remember to breathe and think back to first principles. "Actually, the answer to how you do it is in those very problems," says Peter. You just need to look a little deeper.

"You can crack it... without the problem you'd never decode it"
Peter Saville

"Remind yourself," he advises, "when confronted with impossibility, therein lies the solution." Then he gets a bit WWII: "It's like the enigma code." Try to stay with it, because it'll be worth it. "You can crack it, it's in there somewhere. But without the problem you'd never decode it." Because you'd have no reason to other than intellectual curiosity.

It seems that this mysterious aphorism does something to clear up the myth of creativity. "People look at things and say 'How did they ever think of that?'," muses Peter. The answer is, "You would never make it up unless you were confronted with the problem."

Above and below: Two unique works by Peter Saville. The secret to achieving these particular results lies in the obstacles he overcame during the creation process.

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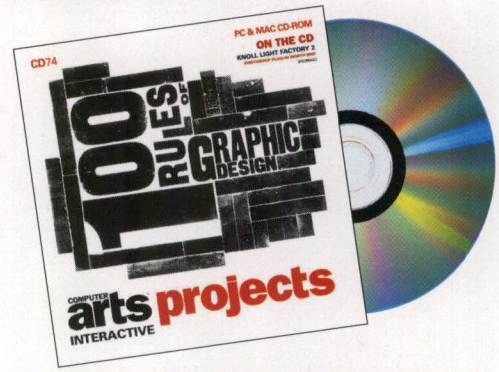

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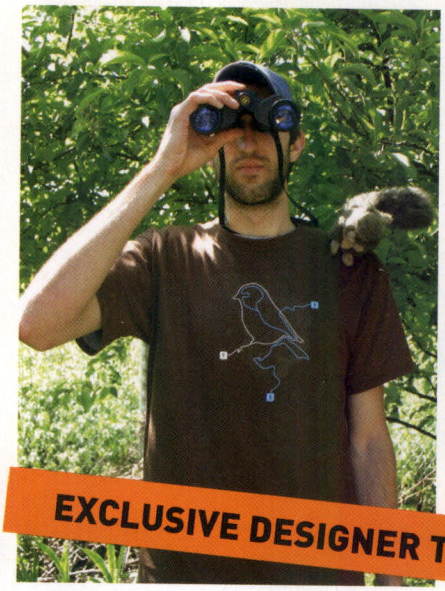

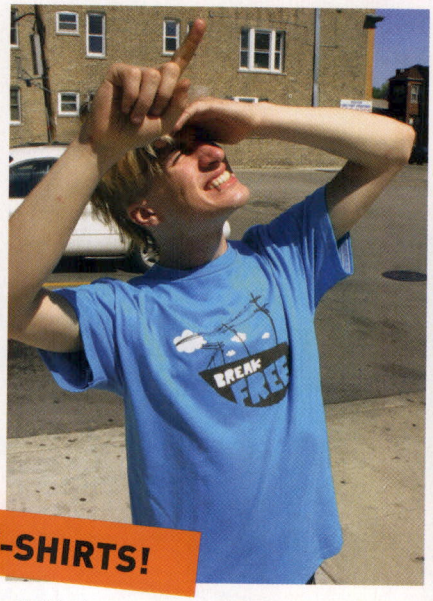

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01 Do what you want to do

The key to success is to do what you enjoy and make sure the world knows about it...

David Carson, Jason Smith, Jonathan Kenyon

> "My dad told me this one," says Jason Smith. "He always said to me, 'You've got to enjoy what you do.' If you enjoy it, you'll be good at it and if you're good at it, money will eventually come." Our panel agree with the Fontsmith's father. If you concentrate on doing something you love, you'll be happy and that will shine through. Financial success or critical recognition will then be a bonus, not something you have to chase.

David Carson is in no doubt that this piece of advice should occupy the top slot. "It's critical," he says. "Number one on the list." In fact: "Forget the rest of the list. This is the one... ENJOY." You have to be sure that there's nothing else you'd rather be doing. David wants you to "Ask yourself, would you do the same work for free?" If money weren't an issue, would you be doing what you're doing? "If you would, you've got a great job," he adds. And you're probably very good at it.

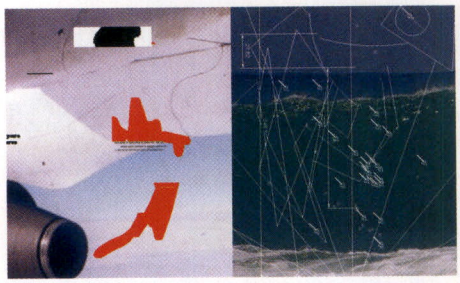
"Keep those creative juices flowing"
David Carson

It's not as if design is renowned for making people rich, or even famous. Designers with the kind of recognition which David Carson or Peter Saville enjoy are rare. The general public is aware of design per se, but asked to name a favourite practitioner, how many would be able to give a sensible answer? If you want fame and fortune, this is probably the wrong game to get into.

Jason Smith concurs: "I don't believe anyone would come into this business to make money." It's doubtful that this is even a sensible thing to have as your aim: "Unless you're Adobe buying the Monotype library." Typographers have even less cause to worry about the paparazzi. Jason distils this into a logical position it's hard to argue with: "You can't expect to make money at it, so the only thing you can do is enjoy it."

Draw on your experiences

"Work for creative freedom," advises Mr Carson. "The money will come later." It's essential to be yourself, to: "Have fun, be subjective, be intuitive, self indulgent even." David's recipe is intended to bring out your personality and put that to work: "No-one else can pull from your background, parents, upbringing – USE IT!" This isn't true of technology: "Anyone can buy the same software and read the same manuals..." David's approach sounds so much more appealing than any kind of business plan: "It's the formula for original, unique work."



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Loving their work: David Carson (top), Jason Smith (above) and Jonathan Kenyon of Vault49 (right).

If you want to have a strong commercial focus, find someone that can look after that side of things for you. "Maybe a girlfriend or boyfriend, or an intern," suggests David Carson. "You don't want to spend your time worrying about such stuff. It's too draining." You must maintain your creativity and your enthusiasm, whatever it is that keeps you coming back. "Gotta keep those creative juices flowing. Coffee in the morning. Beer at night." Cheers David.

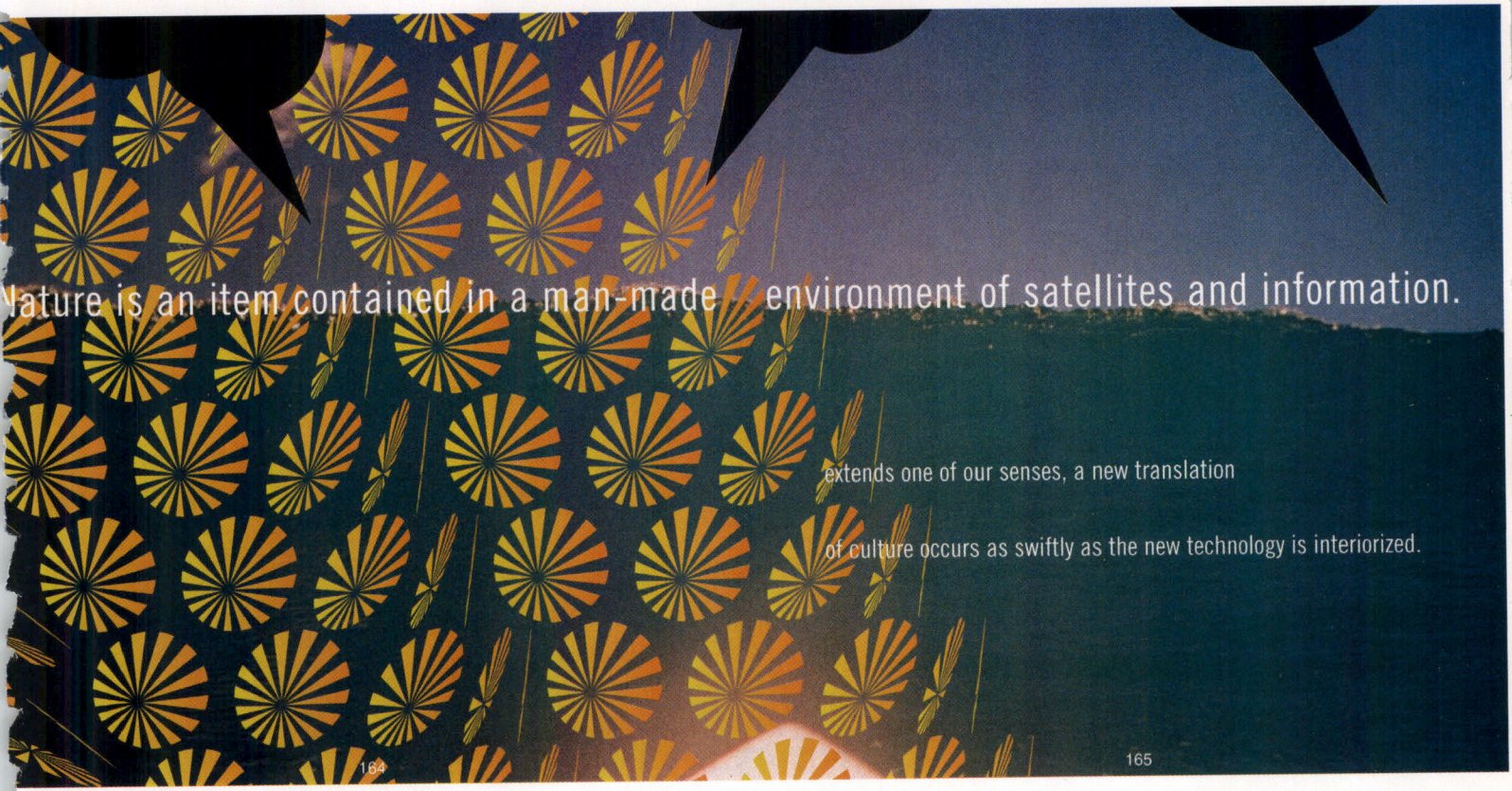
Still, it's easy to be flippant, particularly if you're already a household name, so perhaps an example will help. Vault49 has experienced an extremely rapid rise in profile since Jonathan Kenyon and John Glasgow set up the firm after leaving college in 2002. "Within our first year, we had an advertising campaign for VH1 USA (including a billboard in Times Square, New York) and a six month exhibition in the gallery of *Dazed & Confused* magazine," says Jonathan.

"Everything we did was out of love"
Jonathan Kenyon

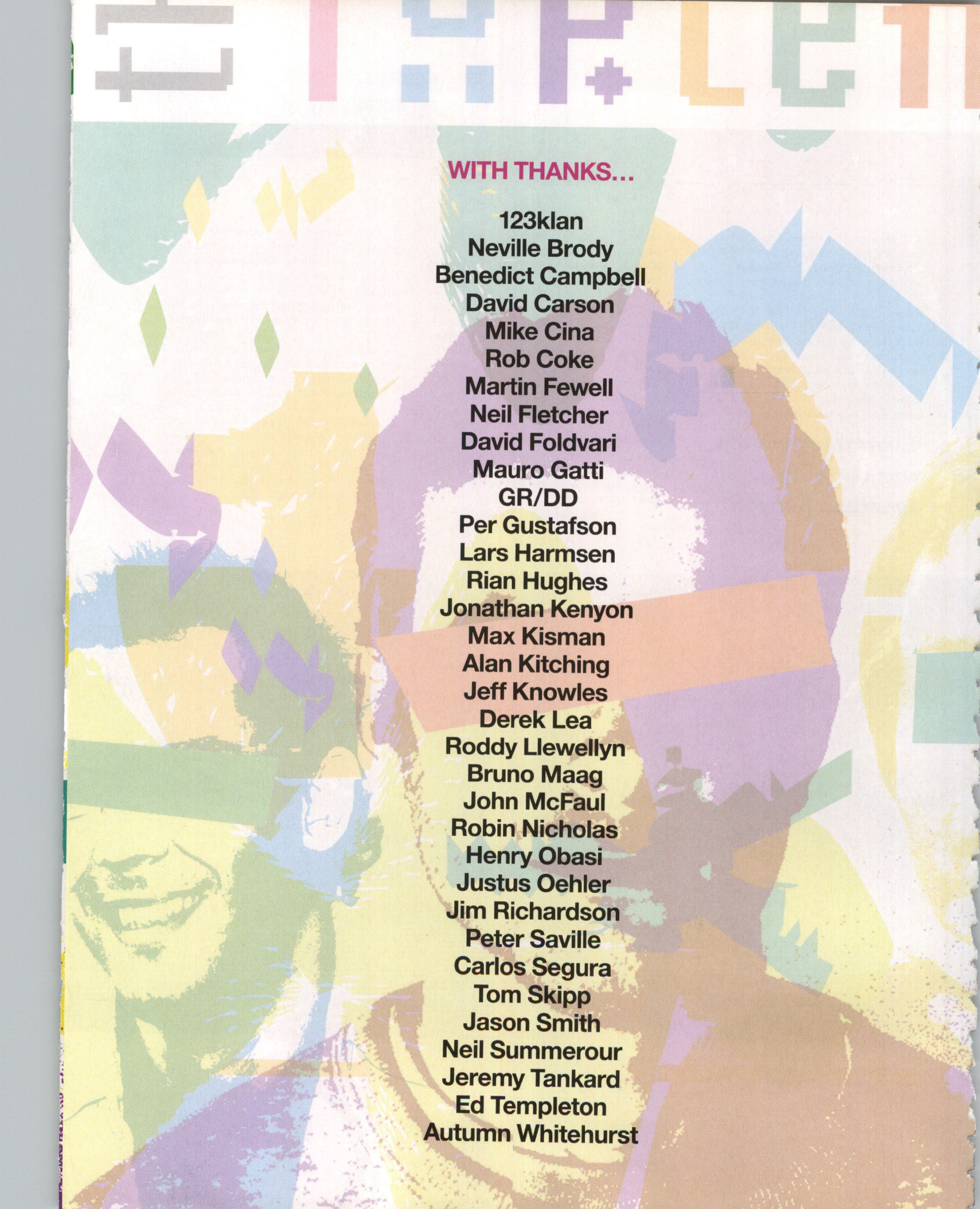
The important thing to note here is not what was achieved but the mechanism of its achievement. Jonathan sets the scene: "In our final year, screen-printing had become our passion and our favourite medium through which to express ourselves." This need for self-expression led to a fly-posting campaign which saw Vault49's work pasted all over London. "We worked incessantly, all hours of the day, purely for the excitement of creating the best work we could," says Jonathan. Then they went out and glued it to the walls.

Vault49 took off when the dynamic duo accidentally fly-posted the windows of the *Dazed & Confused* office, which Jonathan assures us "could easily be mistaken for a squat." The magazine tracked them down and the rest is history. "Everything we did was purely out of love for our work and the joy of walking the streets of London seeing our designs," says Jonathan. However, the general aim was to get noticed: "The areas where most of the design firms and press were located were our prime target."

The moral of the story is that success can and does come from where you least expect it to. Of course, the Vault49 boys weren't innocent of the fact that their fly-posting was going to be seen by potential buyers, but that just means they were switched on to the possibilities. Working for the love of things doesn't mean purposefully avoiding commercial opportunities. ca-p


Nature is an item contained in a man-made environment of satellites and information.
extends one of our senses, a new translation
of culture occurs as swiftly as the new technology is interiorized.

David Carson's other great love is surfing. "Have fun, be subjective, be intuitive, self indulgent even," he enthuses.



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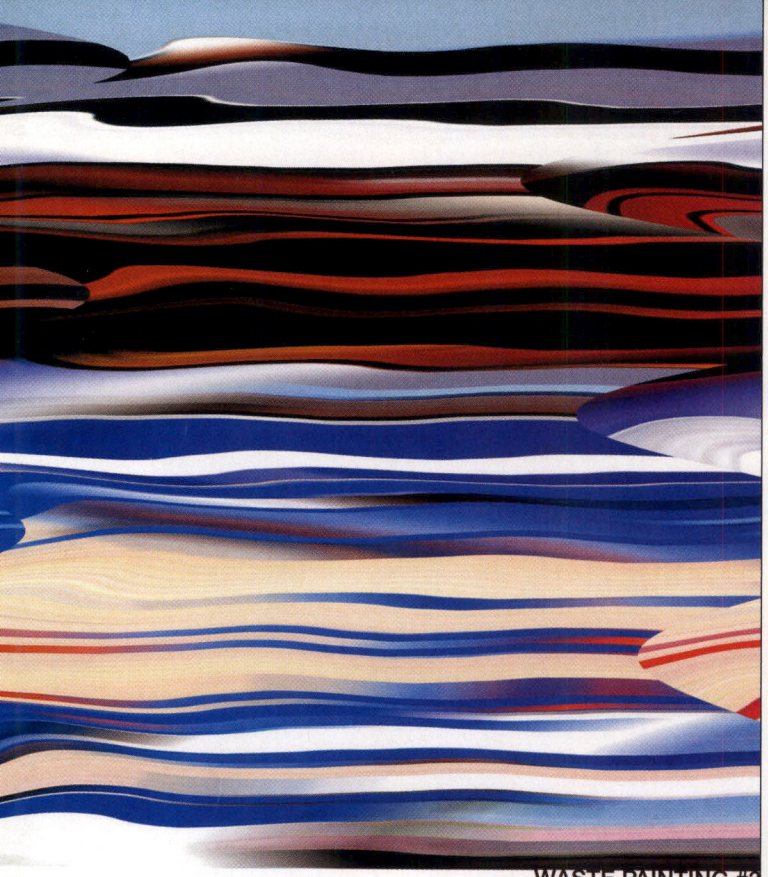
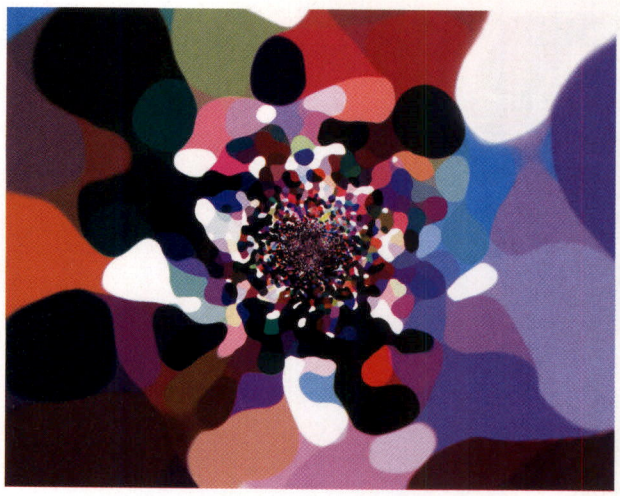


WASTE PAINTING #3
NEW ORDER COVERS
PETER SAVILLE 2003



Peter Saville

"I design for myself and a naively idealistic point of view on my times." Peter Saville unravels design…

Peter Saville has led something of a charmed existence. From the early days at Factory Records to his current status as Artistic Director for the city of Manchester, he's been free to exercise creative freedom and influence few ever get to taste.

Having provided his clients with a kind of cultural Rosetta stone for the last 25 years, Peter Saville has developed a great line in cultural insight, the exercise of which he refers to as, "The lesser understood dimension of Peter Saville." And while he remains alternately worldly and idealistic, the creative talent he calls upon under the name Saville Associates continues to ensure that icons such as EMI, Givenchy and Mercedes Benz retain that status.

Factory business

Starting out as the Co-Founder and Creative Director at Factory Records in the late 70s exposed the young Peter Saville to almost radioactive levels of creative freedom. "I didn't appreciate it at the time," he says.

At an age when most designers are lucky to be choosing the position of that crucial half-price sticker, Peter says, "I had a remarkably autonomous moment gifted to me by meeting Tony Wilson in 1975." In the shape of Factory Records, Tony Wilson provided "an avenue of idealism and a whole bunch of us went down that avenue."

> "The audience is on a learning curve. It's like learning to appreciate new food"

Peter has been giving free rein to his creativity ever since, developing a propensity for translating his times into starkly beautiful imagery which has won him and his clients reverential treatment. All he says is, "I was able to do things the way I thought they should be done."

The times are a-changing

For all his iconic stature, Peter Saville has a somewhat pessimistic view of the state of design and, by extension, the society it reflects. "Our relationship with design has shifted in the last 25 years," he says. This could be taken as a glib comment, but when you consider Peter's role in changing that relationship, it carries a lot of weight. He acknowledges "a contributing influence" in a process which has led him to conclude: "There's very little professional work I want to do at the moment."

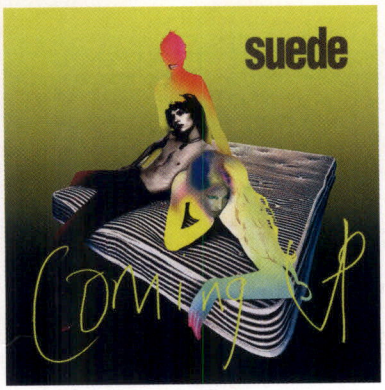
It didn't used to be like this: "Back in the 80s there was a mission to be undertaken." When he left college in the late 70s Peter took stock of his surroundings: "I looked at the UK and I was disappointed. Everywhere I looked I saw what was missing." It was this situation which the young Peter Saville set out to rectify, stepping in to fill those blank spaces with ground-breaking work for bands such as New Order, OMD and Joy Division.

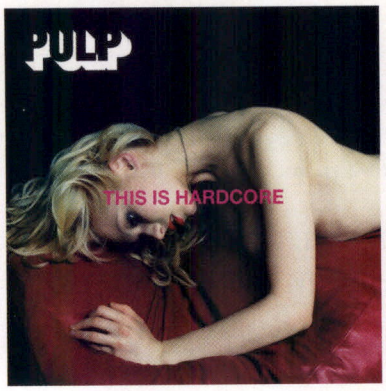
Twenty-five years later, with every corner boasting a sophisticated coffee shop with a carefully styled interior, there's some good news and there's some bad news. "It's 'mission accomplished'," says Peter, "in a phase-one type of way."

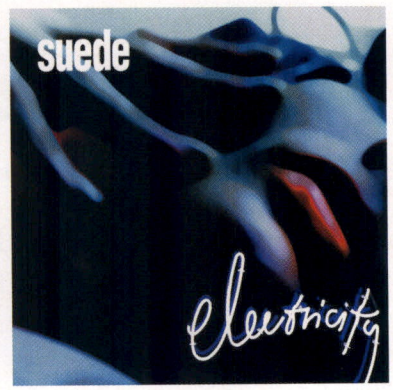
However, somewhere along the line, the design train has left the tracks and is ploughing on through land it was never meant to touch: "We didn't want it to be a joint venture with capitalism," says Peter, warming to his theme. "Design has become the new advertising." This started happening because we stopped believing adverts and unfortunately, "We're already starting to suspect design."

This state of affairs means designers are faced with a craft robbed of its art: "Most clients aren't looking to contribute to their culture, they just want to flog a dead horse. To make the same product look like a new one." The problem is: "Fifteen years ago, a considered appearance meant people had thought about what they were offering you. Today it's almost a warning." The challenge to designers and their audiences is to stop the relationship from souring.

So what can be done? Deploying a kind of cat-and-mouse strategy Peter answers: "Luckily, I don't need to care." But we want







Left: Saville Associates has produced album cover art and promotional material for some of the world's biggest bands including New Order, Pulp and Suede.

Below and opposite page: The waste painting series happened almost by accident. Peter was immediately taken with the image and the concept. "The great thing about the waste paintings was that we were recycling last week's pixels," he reveals.

him to care, he's brought us this far. "It will sort itself out," he assures. "The audience is on a learning curve. It's like learning to appreciate new food. It starts with a cappuccino and a pizza – who knows where it's going to end." He suggests goats cheese and sun dried tomatoes as possible destinations, but you get the point.

The digital condition

Today, Peter relies on Howard Wakefield, long-term collaborator, to deal with the computer directly – he remains 'hands off'. In the late 80s, this was down to Brett Wickens, a man Peter describes as "a technical mastermind." It was Brett, in 1988, who insisted that they had to have one of the brand new Macintosh computers, with one fell swoop shifting their work into the digital realm.

"He was like dad with a new car," Peter jokes. "And I was mum: I could sit in it but I didn't know how it worked." Instead, Peter and Brett would sit together at the machine, much as they had at the drawing board, Peter giving directions and Brett finding a way to make it so.

Something for the weekend

"The first Factory poster worked in the same way a haircut would." Harking back to the early 80s when like-minded souls would spot each other by their daring haircuts, Peter explains that his work operates on the same principle: "Those looking for it will get it."

Although the audience for these coded messages grows by the day, designers capable of making them mean something are still in short supply, hence Peter's advice: "Embrace philosophically what you are doing, if you can." With this in mind, advising EMI on identity or the city of Manchester on its global strategy are little different to designing record sleeves for New Order. As he says himself, "I'm still doing what I've always done, but the platform and the results are quite different." ca-p

Below: David Carson's interest in the eminently quotable wisdom of Marshall McLuhan, the Canadian intellectual and media culture icon, led him to produce *The Book of Probes*.

Profile

[w] www.davidcarsondesign.com

David Carson

"Overall, I'd say I'm a bit of a lazy person. But with graphic design it's always been such a passion it rarely feels like work." David Carson on motivation...

Very few people have had the kind of impact on their chosen field that David Carson has had on graphic design. From *Surfer* magazine in the early 90s, through 33 issues of *Ray Gun* and on to ad campaigns for giants such as Nike, Microsoft and Fox TV, David's work has consistently refreshed and invigorated graphic design.

His distinctive style has been called 'illegible' as often as it's been hailed beautiful, but this doesn't faze the man who once famously advised against "mistaking legibility for communication." And, anyway, as the author of the world's best-selling book on graphic design, he's happy to let the figures speak for themselves.

Surf's up

David didn't start out to be a graphic designer. Instead, he studied and then taught sociology while simultaneously becoming a professional surfer. Graphic design came to the rescue late in the day, cavalry-style: "I first heard the term 'graphic design' when I was 26 years old," says Carson. "A summer workshop at the university of Arizona, taught by Jackson Boelts, convinced me I wanted to be a graphic designer." Late or not, it was a revelation: "It was crystal clear," he says, something sociology class never is.

The phenomenal success of magazines such as *Beach Culture*, *Surfer* and *Ray Gun* is well documented. David elevated what looked like a typographic train wreck against a background of brilliantly sly photography to something dangerously close to art. Awards, cult status and a mile-wide slick of emulators followed rapidly.

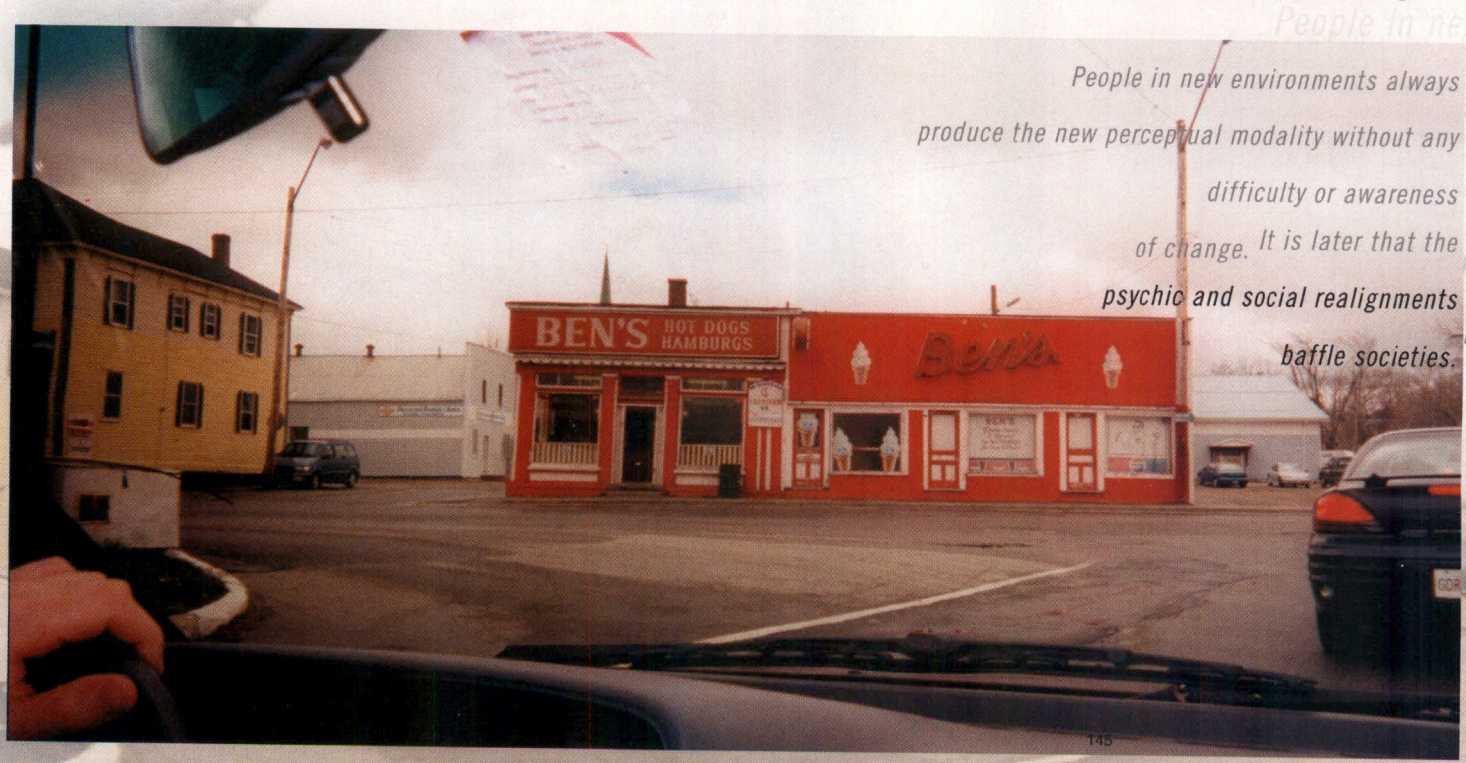
The ad world comes a-calling

With this kind of street cred, it was only a matter of time before the tick turned up. Sure enough, "Nike was the first," says David. And before long, Microsoft, Armani, Mercedes Benz and CNN were knocking at his door. "The ones that called always said they wanted something different or unusual – that's why they had hunted me down."

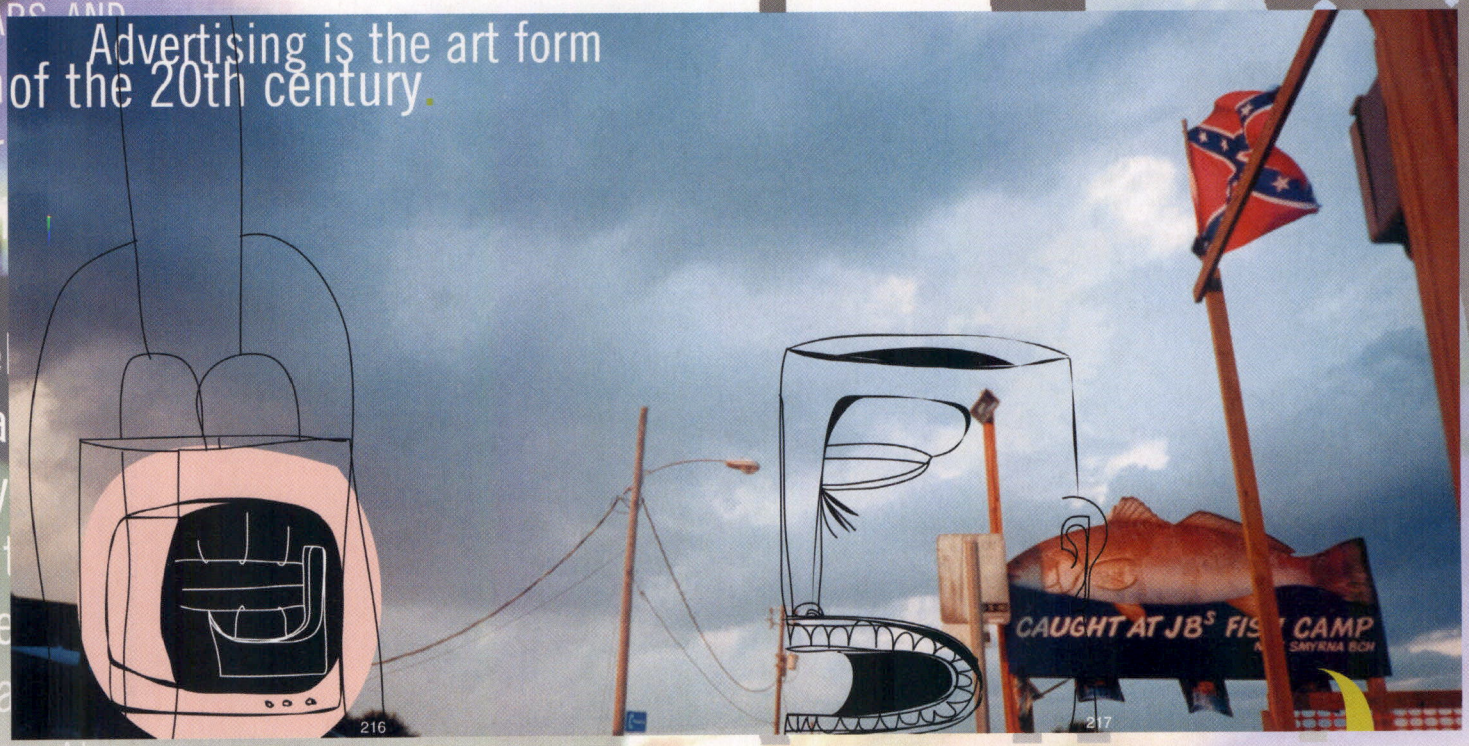
The advertisers were certainly keen to get in on the action, but remained averse to risk, and illegibility is a risk. Once they were through the door, David says: "It was a matter of how much they actually let me get away with... which, overall, was quite a bit."

Commercial considerations don't always marry perfectly with creative vision but, says David, "Even if you're feeling the pressure, turn that into a challenge." It's possible to produce something you will both be happy with: "Sometimes it's just a small thing that makes it 'yours', something the guy in the next cubicle wouldn't have thought to do." In David's case, this sometimes meant ensuring his name appeared prominently in the work, but that may have been the advertisers wanting to distance themselves from the huge volume of counterfeit Carsons.

Not content with shaking up the worlds of magazine publishing, graphic design,



People in new environments always produce the new perceptual modality without any difficulty or awareness of change. It is later that the psychic and social realignments baffle societies.



Douglas Adams

typography and advertising, David has also produced one of the design industry's few crossover book titles. "*The End of Print* has sold over 275,000 copies worldwide, in four different languages," announces the proud author. Perhaps hamming it up a bit, David says, "If I'd known it was going to do so well, I would have designed a much nicer book."

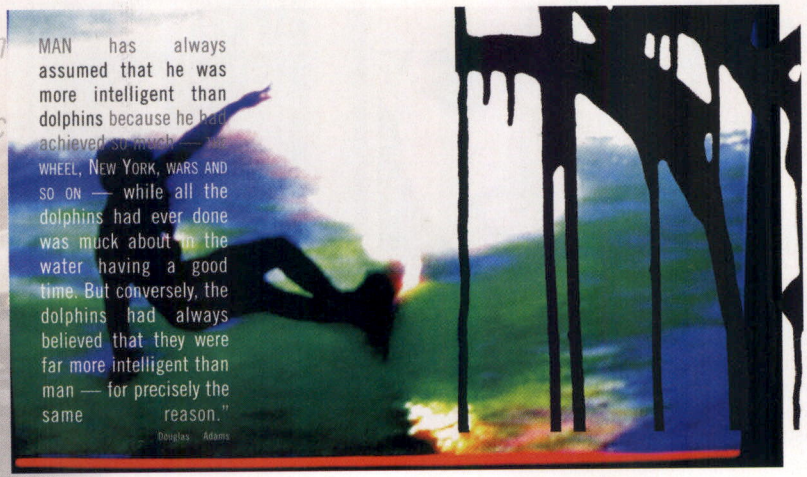
His latest book, *Trek*, combines photography, print, film and Web work from the last five years, documenting David's movement throughout the world: teaching, surfing and observing. "It's a little bonus of having had some successful design books – I get to include my 'home movies' in the new books," he says, explaining the use of his own photography in the new title.

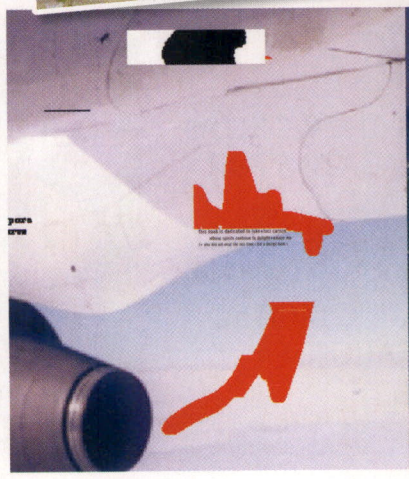
Price of fame

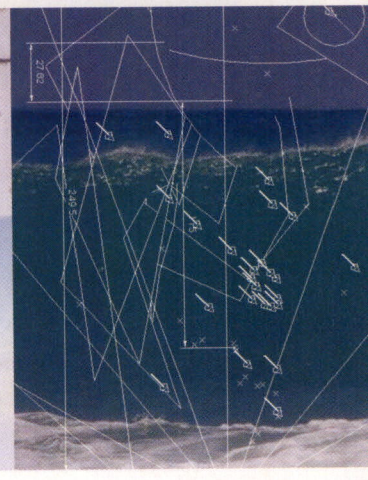
With all this success there has to come a point when you're no longer on the outside, when it's your style that has become the source of rules to be broken. "I just do what I do, hopefully progressing, and don't worry much about the various labels," says David. While we're on the subject, what is the Carson creative process like? "After reading everything possible about a project, I then move right to the computer." Again slightly unorthodox, David omits the pen-and-paper stage, explaining that, "There's nothing wrong or less valid about going right to the screen, despite what your tutor may have told you." It's all about finding your own way, not attempting a 'best fit'. ca-p

Above: *The Book of Probes* combines David's distinctive visual style with the Canadian's incisive wit and prophetic vision.

Left and below: *Trek* is David's first book for five years. It documents his travels and work over that period: lecturing, surfing and observing. Much of the photography used in the book is his own, of which he says: "It's a matter of seeing/noticing things that surround us. I'm always scanning my environment."


MAN has always assumed that he was more intelligent than dolphins because he had achieved so much — WHEEL, NEW YORK, WARS AND SO ON — while all the dolphins had ever done was muck about in the water having a good time. But conversely, the dolphins had always believed that they were far more intelligent than man — for precisely the same reason."
Douglas Adams





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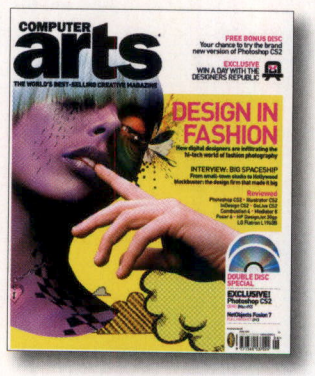

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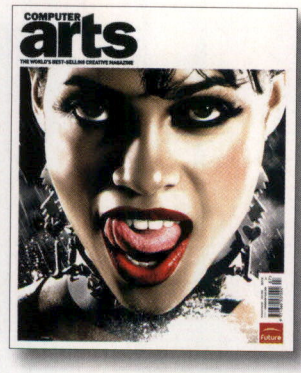

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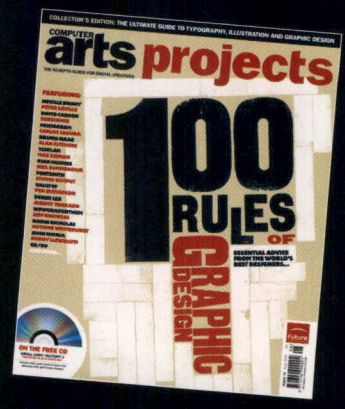

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The new-look site will not only feature exciting content from *Computer Arts* and *Computer Arts Projects*, but also sister magazines *Mac Format* and *3D World*, the latter providing superb resources for both animators and 3D modellers.

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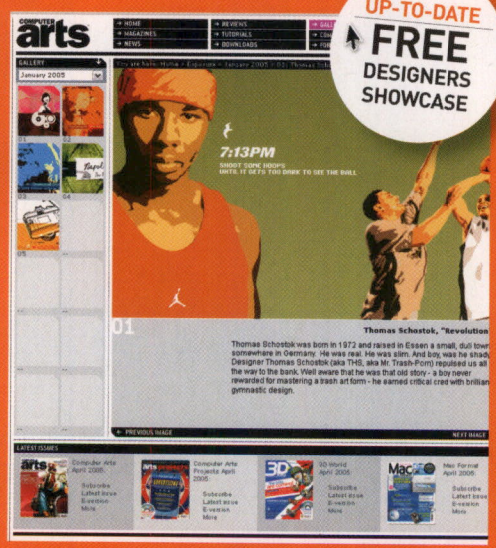

→1 Free tutorials for subscribers
If you subscribe to the print version of *Computer Arts*, all online premium content is **free!** Simply register your details with us online and you'll receive a unique log-in that enables you to access our fully searchable database of tutorials. These expert how-tos normally cost between 99p and £2.50 each.

→2 Exposure gallery
Every month, we'll showcase the best in contemporary design in our extensive online gallery – the only place to see and be seen. So go on, submit your work and let your artistry be an inspiration to others. Who knows? You may even get an exciting commission out of it!

→3 Hundreds of searchable tutorials
If you want to know how to master a new digital creative technique, whether it's in *Photoshop* or *Illustrator*, web design, 3D or animation, you'll find what you're looking for in our new Tutorials section. We'll feature a selection of free tutorials to download and more in-depth premium tutorials, all in PDF format.

THE NEW DESIGN →

- **BRAND NEW NAVIGATION**
  Access content from *Computer Arts*, *3D World*, *Mac Format* and *Computer Arts Projects* from here
- **EXPOSURE GALLERY**
  An extensive and impressive online gallery showcasing the best of contemporary design
- **HUNDREDS OF TUTORIALS**
  Find any tutorial in no time at all with our powerful and handy website search facility
- **NEWS BLOG AREA**
  Keep up-to-date with the latest product releases, events and cool design links, updated daily
- **MORE FEATURES**
  Exclusive interviews, practical features, opinion columns and Q&As – it's all here and in depth
- **MORE NEWS & REVIEWS**
  Up-to-the-minute news at your fingertips, plus top hardware and software reviews

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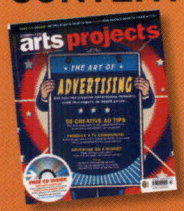

- **CA PROJECTS**
  Each issue of *Computer Arts Projects* gives you a detailed guide to a different creative subject. Recent issues have covered print and web design, *Photoshop* and how to start your own design business.

- **3D WORLD**
  3D World is the only international magazine for 3D artists. Tutorials cover every major 3D software package, while in-depth articles showcase the work of industry-leading 3D companies.

- **MAC FORMAT**
  The number one-selling consumer Mac magazine, full of practical and passionate advice. Each month, you can expect to find a range of expert tutorials, plus the best hardware and software reviews.

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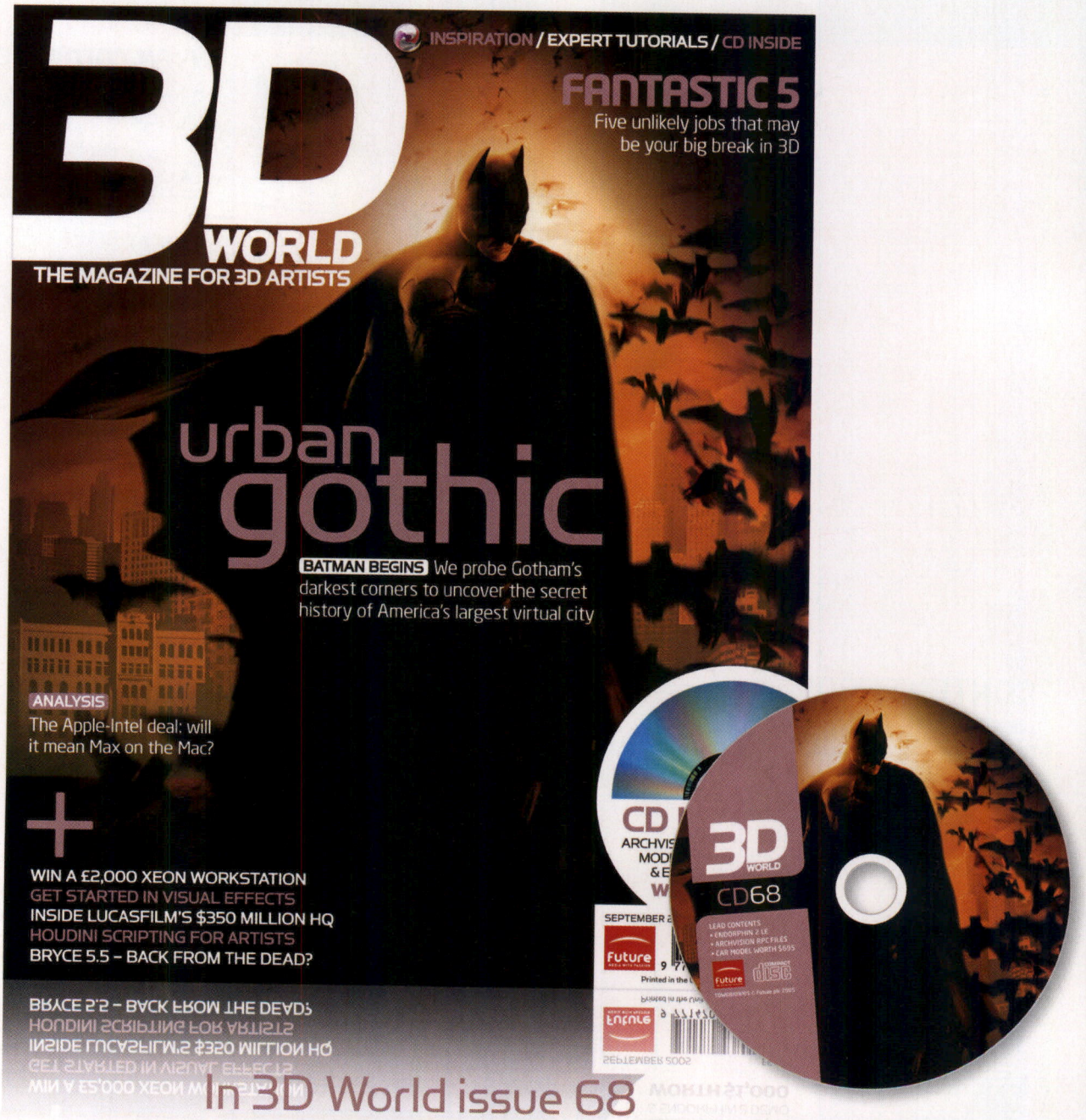
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In 3D World issue 68

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COMPUTER arts projects

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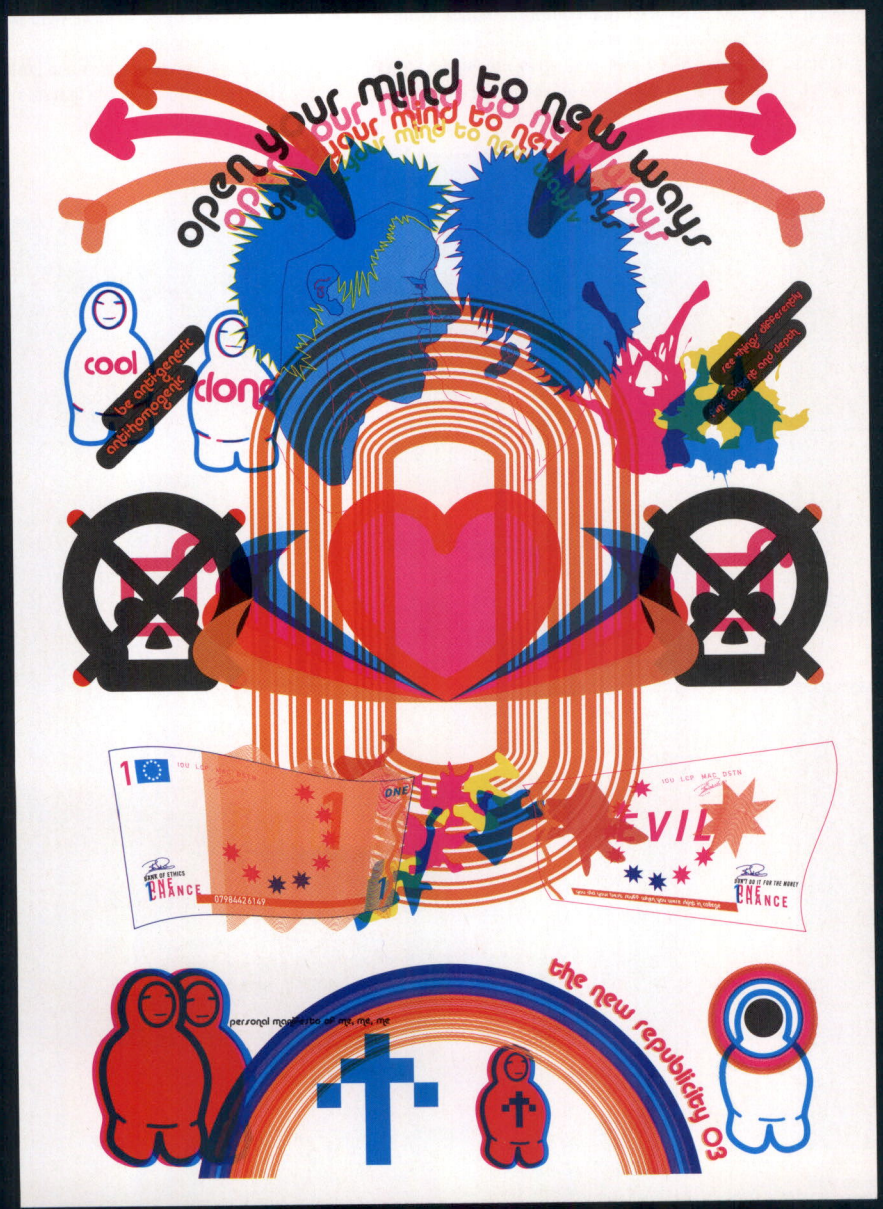

Illustration: Ben Reece, Research Studios

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EXCLUSIVE TUTORIALS: Brand new design tutorials from the industry's leading artists and illustrators

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MASSIVE ART SHOWCASE: We show you the best new work from up-and-coming illustrators, digital artists and designers...

Issue 75 on sale Thurs 18 AUG

All contents correct at time of going to press

Tutorial

[w] www.redgiantsoftware.com

Knoll Light Factory 2

Get to grips with this fantastic *Photoshop* plug-in – free on your CD!

As far as *Photoshop* plug-ins go, what could be better than one designed by the Co-founder of *Photoshop* and Visual Effects Supervisor at ILM? Well, that's exactly what we've got for you free on this month's CD.

Usually sold for $99, this is the very latest version of the plug-in, and one that enables you to create all manner of stunning lighting effects and add flare (no pun intended) to any project. *Knoll Light Factory 2 Photoshop* simulates reflections from a very bright light source as seen in a camera's lens. There are 25 individual lens components to create custom lighting effects, 40 built-in presets designed by John Knoll and, best of all, it's a cinch to use.

Some sample uses could be to simulate a bright spotlight, create different moods in an image, enhance rendered explosions, add sparkles and glows, or even replicate sun flares around a planet. However you use it – subtly or to the extreme – *Knoll Light Factory 2* is a valuable addition to any designer or *Photoshop* artist's tool set.

The full version of *Knoll Light Factory 2*, available from [w] www.redgiantsoftware.com, will work with *After Effects, Final Cut Pro, Digital Fusion* and other applications, making it easy to animate and integrate your lighting effects in your film footage.

And we're giving it to you for absolutely nothing. Read on to discover the features of this fantastic plug-in...

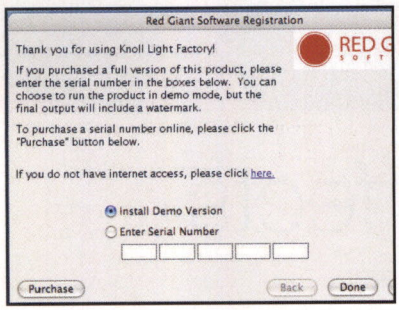
KNOLL
LIGHT
FACTORY 2
The gold standard in lighting effects, this 22-filter set makes everything from twinkling stars to photon torpedoes. Straight from the mind of effects luminary John Knoll, this package is essential to thousands of visual effects artists.
published by
RED GIANT
SOFTWARE
www.redgiantsoftware.com

Some of the dramatic light effect you can create with this month's free plug-in. Follow the tutorial opposite to find out how...

FREE ON YOUR CD, WORTH $99!

Start using your free Photoshop plug-in

We show you some of the many possibilities offered by *Knoll Light Factory 2*...


Red Giant Software Registration
Thank you for using Knoll Light Factory!
If you purchased a full version of this product, please enter the serial number in the boxes below. You can choose to run the product in demo mode, but the final output will include a watermark.
To purchase a serial number online, please click the "Purchase" button below.
If you do not have internet access, please click here.
Install Demo Version
Enter Serial Number
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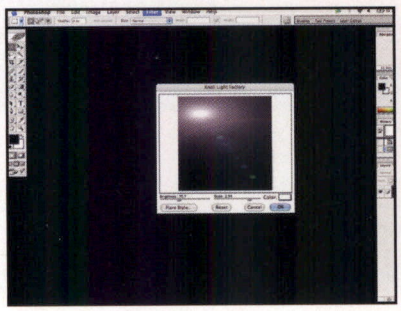
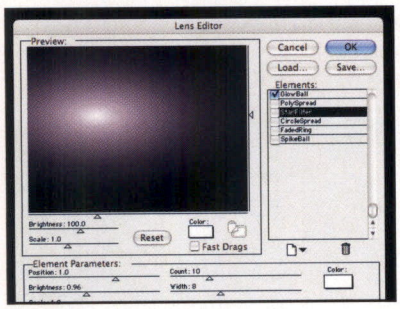
1 Begin by installing your copy of *Knoll Light Factory*. The plug-in works with *Photoshop 6, 7* and *CS* (but not *CS 2*). Follow the instructions on page 96 to get your serial code, and when prompted by the installer, enter it. Bear in mind you don't have to select the *Photoshop* plug-ins folder when installing, just the main application folder.

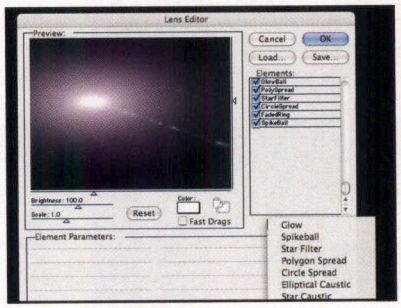


2 As with most *Photoshop* plug-ins, *Knoll Light Factory* resides in the Filter menu. Go to Filter>Knoll Light Factory>Knoll Light Factory... The basic *Light Factory* interface appears and enables you to ramp up the brightness and scale of the default lens flare. Click on the Flare Style button to bring up advanced options.

3 Take a look at the Lens Editor dialog that appears. Underneath the preview window there's the basic controls for brightness, scale and colour (you can change the latter by clicking on the colour button and using the colour picker). Click and drag on the lens in the preview window to alter the direction in 3D space.

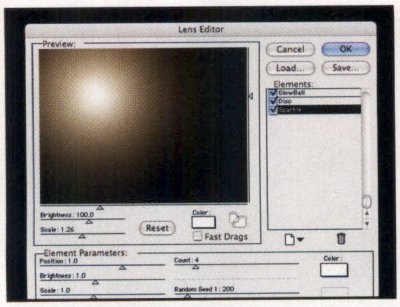


4 Where *Light Factory* gets interesting is in the way you can stack different elements on top of each other to create extravagant, or subtle lighting effects. Take a look at the Elements palette, and turn on and off a few of the default elements to start to understand what effect this has.

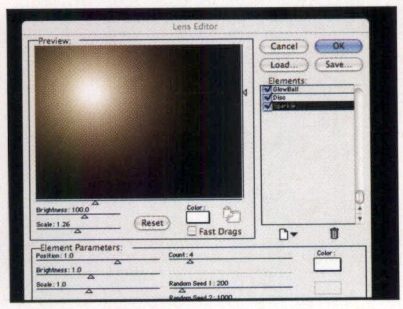


5 You can also load in other elements. Click on the white page icon at the bottom of the Elements palette. A list of preset effects appears, enabling you to add various lighting and flare elements to your effect. Select the bottom effect and hit the wastebasket icon to delete the element. Do this for the entire stack.

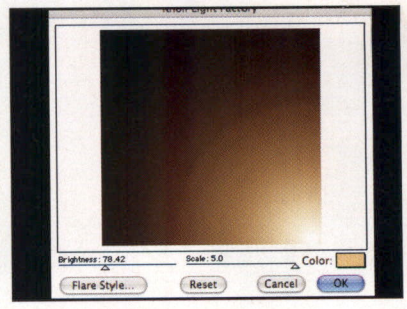
6 Now begin building your effect. Hit the page icon and select Glow from the list. The preview window updates. Select the GlowBall in the Elements list and begin to alter the parameters that appear at the bottom of the interface. Change the outer and inner colours if necessary, and the brightness and scale depending on your needs.



7 Add another element, this time a Disc. Again alter the colours to complement your glow. The idea here is to use *Knoll Light Factory* to build up a subtle glow with a strong highlight. To add some dynamism to your glow effect, add a Sparkle element and then, in the parameters, take the Count slider down to a low number – no more than three.



8 Once you're happy with the effect you've created, you can easily save the stacking order by hitting the Save button and specifying a file name. This can then be loaded at any time in the future using the Load button – a very handy feature.



9 Click OK and you'll be taken back to the main interface. Here, adjust the brightness and scale according to the image the glow is being composited onto (if it's not simply onto a plain black background, like our example). If you're not happy, go back into the Lens Editor and try again. With this plug-in there are so many possibilities... ca-p

Knoll Light Factory 2

The full version of *Knoll Light Factory 2* works with *After Effects, Final Cut Pro, Digital Fusion* and other apps. Check it out at **[w]** www.redgiantsoftware.com

COMPUTER arts projects INTERACTIVE

CD HIGHLIGHTS

Knoll Light Factory 2
Use this free software to simulate reflections from a very bright light source, like those found in your favourite blockbuster Hollywood movies.

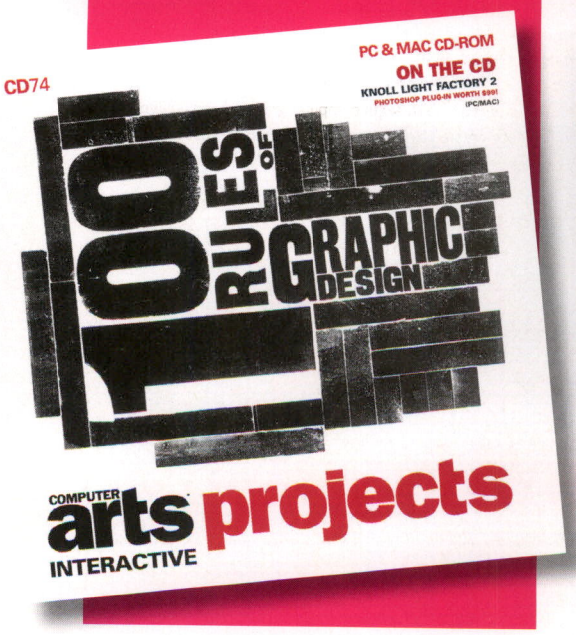
Illustrator CS 2 training
Total Training's Deke McClelland shows you the new features in Adobe's latest vector editing software.

Photoshop CS 2 training
Adobe's *Photoshop* expert Russell Brown teaches you about the new functionality in *CS 2*, including the vanishing point, bridge workflow, RAW images and creating a watermark action.

20 ImageDJ images
Check out the selection of 20 eye-catching examples from Japanese royalty-free specialists ImageDJ.

PhotoSpin fonts
Four inspiring PhotoSpin fonts: Affluent, Dreamorp, Duality and Echelon.

Cape Arcona Fonts
Four fonts from top type foundry Cape Arcona.



Free lighting effects

Light up your images with this dazzling software...

Knoll Light Factory 2

Use this free software to create professional lighting effects in *Photoshop*...

Light Factory was created by John Knoll, Co-creator of Adobe *Photoshop* and Visual Effects Supervisor at Industrial Light and Magic. *Knoll Light Factory 2* includes 25 individual lens filters that enable you to design a wide array of effects, from simple flares to glows and a photon torpedo similar to those found in *Star Trek*. Your free plug-in also delivers an unprecedented amount of control over the look of your light effects by combining simple elements such as glows, stars, fans and spike shapes.

See below for details on how to get your serial number for the full product.

FULL SOFTWARE WORTH $99!

Serial info...

Get your Knoll Light Factory 2 serial number

Enabling your full free version of *Knoll Light Factory 2* is easy. Start by going to **[w] www.redgiantsoftware.com/knollpsserialnumber.html**. After clicking the 'Get Serial Number' hyperlink, you need to fill in a form. Once you've received the serial number, you can install the software and enter the number in the Serial number text input field.

Free fonts

We bring you eight fonts to liven up your projects...

PhotoSpin provides the first group of four fonts on this month's disc: Affluent, Dreamorp, Duality and Echelon, worth $49.95 each. PhotoSpin is a group of creative professionals based in Southern California with backgrounds in photography, graphic design, advertising and film. The company was founded in 1996 to provide a service for those creatives wanting quick access to good content at an affordable price.

Cape Arcona is the other type foundry to provide you with free fonts this month. Stefan Claudius and Thomas Schostok have provided four fonts for you to use in your projects. These are No Dr, Play, Trasher and Viva Las Vegas. As a bonus for *Computer Arts Projects* readers, you'll also find a preview version of the Geheimagent font.

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. 1234567890
The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. 1234567890
The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. 1234

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. 1234567890
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More info... www.photospin.com, www.cape-arcona.com

ImageDJ royalty-free photographs

20 high-resolution images free for you to use in your personal projects

This month we continue our partnership with ImageDJ. We're giving away 20 photos from the large collection available on its website.

ImageDJ was the first company to introduce multi-layered stock imagery back in 2000, in the form of the Designmaster royalty-free Photoshop PSD series. The firm specialises in offering royalty-free stock photography to creative professionals at affordable prices, with CDs costing from $49 to $299. ImageDJ is currently offering a number of special deals for its customers – just check out the website for more details.

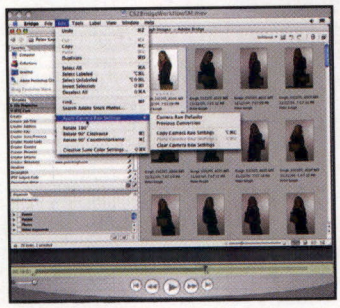
More info... www.imagedj.com/shopping/index.php?newlang=english

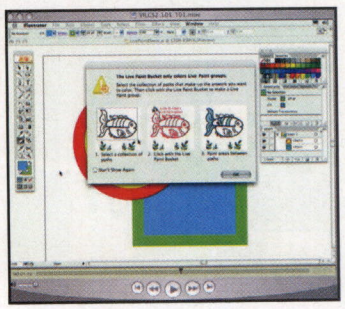
CS 2 video training suite

The new versions of *Photoshop* and *Illustrator* explained...

This month we bring you brand new video training from leading brands. The first set of sample video tutorials is taken from the retail version of Total Training's Adobe *Illustrator CS 2*. In the retail version, you're given the opportunity to learn the latest drawing techniques and enhanced functionality using new features such as Live Trace and Live Paint. These videos are presented by Deke McClelland, a well-known expert and lecturer in computer graphics and design.

The *Photoshop CS 2* video tutorials, created by Adobe *Photoshop* expert Russell Brown, have been designed to explain the new features in the latest version of *Photoshop*. We introduce you to the new levels of power, precision and control that are now possible with the combination of revolutionary new features and next-generation enhancements.

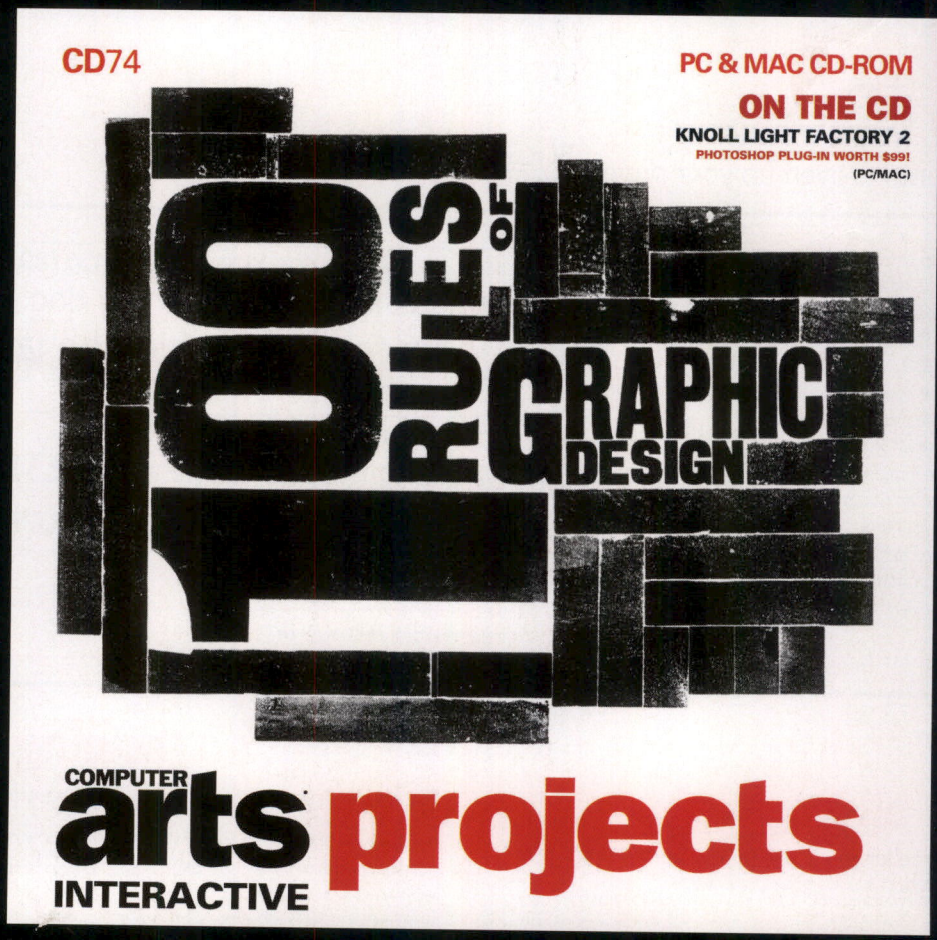




More info... www.totaltraining.co, http://russellbrown.com

On the CD...

Full contents on page 96



Full product

Knoll Light Factory 2 Photoshop plug-in (Mac and PC)

Resources

4 PhotoSpin fonts

4 Cape Arcona fonts

20 ImageDJ images

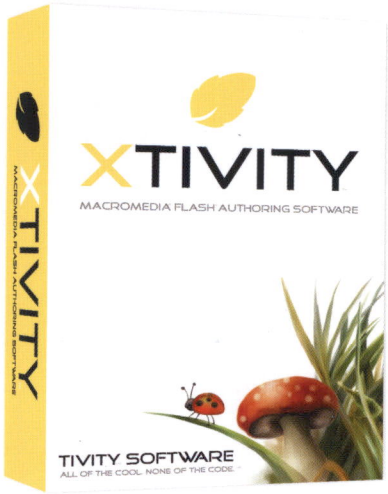
Video training

Photoshop CS2 training from Adobe's Russell Brown

Illustrator CS2 training from Total Training

All of the Cool None of the Code™

Xtivity™ is a new, professional Macromedia® Flash® (SWF) Authoring Software program that allows you to visually design interactive Flash web projects in a layout style workflow. There is no coding involved and you operate without using a timeline, symbols, movie clips or any of the traditional methods used to author interactive Flash projects.



Xtivity is designed to provide a robust professional workflow that enables you to develop cutting-edge Flash web designs with no experience needed working in Flash. If you have ever tried to learn Flash and couldn't master it, Xtivity gives you an alternative solution to create state-of-the-art interactive projects faster and easier than Macromedia Flash.

Xtivity sells for $399 (USD) and has a **very low learning curve**. You draw boxes, add content to the boxes, assign actions to the boxes and then tell the actions when to start. It's that easy!

Xtivity exports the final project to the Macromedia Flash (SWF) file format which plays in the Flash Player on 98.3% of the world's internet browsers, just like Macromedia Flash.

Find out what everyone is raving about. Download a fully functional 30 Day Trial Version of Xtivity and see for yourself: **www.tivity.com**

There are hundreds of cutting-edge features in Xtivity to improve your workflow and design.

Directly import Adobe® Photoshop® PSD files and add interactivity to each individual layer. If you edit your Photoshop file you can automatically flow these changes into Xtivity and each layer in your project is updated for you.

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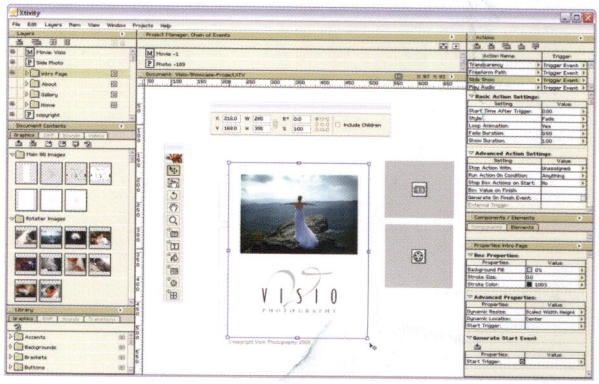
macromedia FLASH ENABLED



Xtivity has a professional workspace that is easy to customize and master. Content and interactivity are easily changed, allowing the project design and development to flow smoothly and rapidly.

When you're done creating your project, use the integrated FTP system to upload your SWF directly to the web with a single keystroke.

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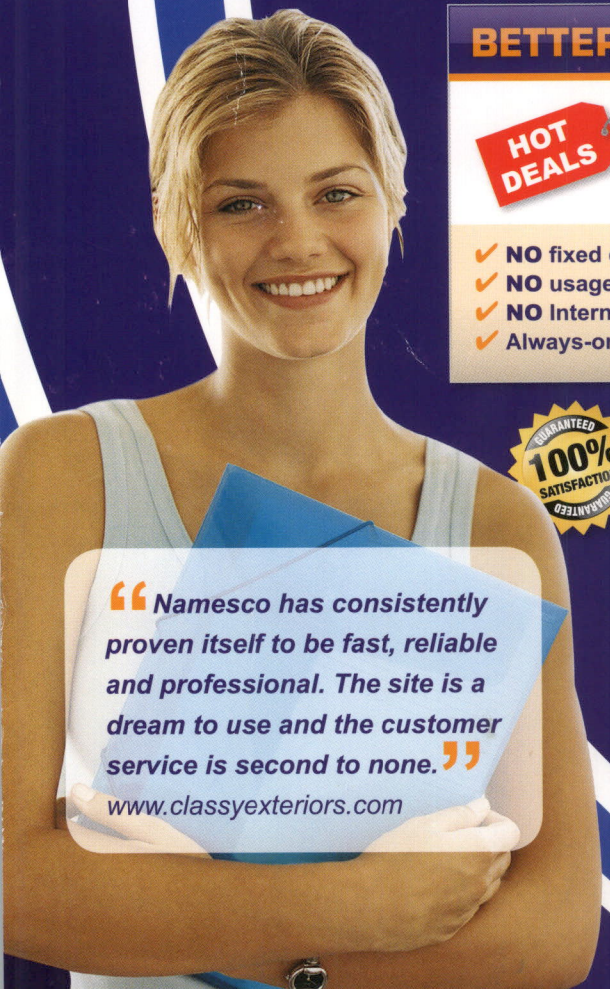
Business+	700MB	50	15GB	£16.99
Enterprise	1GB	100	20GB	£21.99
Enterprise+	1.5GB	200	30GB	£24.99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